

This is
India

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This is India

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This is India

KANWAR LAL



ASIA PRESS

19, FAIZ BAZAR
DELHI (INDIA)

"Everything in India attracts me. It has everything that a human being with the highest possible aspirations can want."

— M.K. Gandhi

PREFACE

Another book on India ! That certainly requires an explanation, if not an apology. For already the shelves and cases of libraries and bookshops are groaning under the weight of variations on this theme. Nevertheless, like the proverbial hope of most parents that their newly-born is a special 'arrival' and God's very own creation, the hope of the Publishers and the Author is that this is a book with a 'difference'. What that difference is, or wherein it lies—whether in the three-in-one combination of general reading matter, statistical data and the pictorial element; in the elegant cover-design and the over-all get-up; or, again, as the Author fondly imagines ! in the 'literary' part of the work—it is for the reader to judge and for the critic to establish. All that we can say is that we have done our best to make this book on India the best in its class.

From the point of view of production, a book like 'This is India' is, a strenuous job. Regarded by some as 'Pictures with some reading matter'; and by others as a 'Book with many pictures', it presents peculiar difficulties. While the Author is busy writing, someone has to be taking pains over collecting, selecting, arranging and rearranging the pictures which have to be put in. Conversely, if the work is treated as a pictorial publication, someone has to prepare the text, tell the enigmatic story of this vast and complex country. Withal, that which is written must not only conform to, but, fit in with the 'scheme' of the book, exactly and accurately, down to the last syllable. Thus whatever the approach, the work requires the kind advice and, even, indulgence of many, and the publishers and the author feel sincerely obliged to all who have been associated, in one way or another, with the planning

and production of this publication. They are specially indebted to the Publications Directorate, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi and to the All India Handicrafts Board, New Delhi for the loan of blocks for pictures on pages 96, 97, 100, 101 & 102 and on pages 104, 105, 106 & 107 respectively.

Of other acknowledgements I have to make two. The first one is in respect of all the 'quotations' I have used. I have freely quoted from others whenever I felt that it helped to put a point across, or wherever I found that something worthwhile had been said and said well. I have done this in the spirit of getting at the truth, and I trust that the Publishers, Authors or others who hold copyrights of such quotations will regard their use as "for fair purposes". All the same full and grateful acknowledgement is made for all quotations included. Finally, I wish to thank my friend and teacher, Shri M. M. Bhalla, Head of the Department of English, St. Stephen's College, Delhi, for having looked through the manuscript and for his valuable advice on countless points.

Delhi
August 14, 1959

Kanwar Lal

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The Country

This is India—a country more easily seen than described and more easily described than understood. For, although but one of the fourscore units which compose the nations of the earth, this is a land with a difference; indeed, with many differences. Extending nearly 2,000 miles from north to south and over 1,800 miles from east to west, she has such a bewildering diversity of landscape and climate, of flora and fauna, of race and religion, of custom and costume, of fare and festival, that the country is, as Monier Williams put it, “in all respects a complete world in itself.” Within its far-flung boundaries the snows of Kāshmir may dream of the ever-so-remote surf-swept shores of Kerala; the desert sands of western Rajasthan may thirst in vain for the distant rains that drench the dense forests of Assam, fifteen hundred miles away; the corn-fields of the Punjab and the Gangetic Plain may know little of the black, cotton soil of the Deccan and less of the coffee-plants of the south—yet all these reveal features of the same face. As to her history, the story stretches far back into the dark, pre-historic ages. And yet, she possesses a civilization which, in richness and antiquity, is rivalled only by those of Mesopotamia and Egypt, of Greece and China. What is more, this civilization has, unlike some others, endured, and has evolved such vital traditions of art and culture that here in India Yesterday and Tomorrow subsist side by side. Beliefs are held, customs followed and rites performed, which reflect, minutely and exactly, the practice of bygone days, of several millenia ago. This juxtaposition of the primitive and the ultra-modern strikes a note that is baffling, quaint, amusing and often embarrassing in the extreme. Yet both these, the ancient mode and the next year’s model, are parts of the same pattern.

Again, in addition to the geographical, historical and cultural aspects, there are the all-important elements of the present-day politics and economics. She is the world's largest democracy, and the second biggest country in terms of population. She is deeply concerned, naturally, with solving the problems of an ever-increasing populace which, for centuries, has led, by and large, a life of misery and poverty. There is, on her soil, a great ferment, a social, economic and political turmoil, which demands immediate attention and quick solutions. An intense, brooding sense—of a sort of race against time—pervades the entire atmosphere. Vast plans are afoot to industrialise the country almost over-night, and to raise the standard of living of the people as rapidly as possible. Giant factories and huge dams are coming up which might look queer in a setting bejewelled with the caves of Ajanta and the Taj, the great Stupa at Sanchi and the Sun Temple at Konarak, the fairy-like water-palaces of Udaipur and the sky-scraping Qutab. Perhaps, the Atomic Reactor at Trombay and the Trimurti at Elephanta are strange companions; yet they must get along together for, once again, each is but a strand in the total weave, but one more tone in the over-all design of this unique tapestry.

Little wonder, then, that whoever, inhabitant or foreigner, has had his mind exposed to the Indian scene has come out with a picture all his own, with a separate version of 'As I see India'. Almost always the view is partial and limited, a fraction of the variety, a mere fragment of the vastness that this country is. There is, invariably, a feeling of being face to face with something large and complex, like life itself, which cannot be summed up in a few sentences, nor sketched away with hasty strokes. Most of these glimpses, these impressions, these portraits remain an inadequate record, often confessedly so. In some cases, they are glaringly subjective, if not positively inaccurate. Witness Babar's verdict on India: Hindustan (as he called it) "is a country that has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society. They have no genius, no intellectual comprehension, no politeness, no kindness or fellow-feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or

executing their handicrafts, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture." Compared with the above, Max Muller's generous tribute to India reads like a reference to some other country: "If I were to look over the whole world," he wrote, "to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow—in some parts a very paradise on earth—I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant—I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans and of one semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life,—again I should point to India."

And if the picture is not inaccurate or one-sided, it is fractional and has to be not one view but a whole reel. Here is, for example, Rawlinson: "What kind of a country is India? The word calls to mind a variety of pictures. To those of the older generation it suggests a land of fabulous wealth, with princes riding on richly decorated elephants, of stately mosques and exquisitely carved temples; to others, especially those who were stationed there in the last war, it conjures up very different memories. Often the train took them, perhaps for days, through hundreds of miles of brown, parched fields and barren deserts, and the leading impression was of the poverty of the crowds who flocked on to the station platforms. Others again think chiefly of the green rice fields and dense forests of the south, with its humid atmosphere, quite different from the dry, fierce heat and intense cold of the north-west frontier. The truth is that India is not a country but a continent..."

There it is, that sense of inadequacy, that feeling of confronting not

a country but a continent...the photographer's stock excuse that the view is too large, the film-strip too selective, so that we must take several shots, try from different angles, order larger lenses! Even those well-known words of Nehru, who should know India as few can, tend to convey a similar impression: "When I think of India, I think of many things: of broad fields dotted with innumerable small villages; of towns and cities I have visited; of the magic of the rainy season which pours life into the dry parched-up land and converts it suddenly into a glistening expanse of beauty and greenery; of great rivers and flowing waters; of the Khyber Pass in all its bleak surroundings; of the southern tip of India; of people, individually and in the mass; and, above all, of the Himalayas, snow-capped, or some mountain valley in Kashmir in the spring, covered with new flowers, and with a brook bubbling and gurgling through it. We make and preserve the picture of our choice, and so I have chosen this mountain background rather than *the more normal* (italics ours) picture of a hot, sub-tropical country. Both pictures would be correct..for India stretches from the tropics right up to the temperate regions, from near the equator to the cold heart of Asia." It is just as well that he added the last sentence, for the South-Indian denizen of the tropical paradise that is, say, Malabar can hardly be expected to appreciate the obvious partiality of this man from northern India, from the mountain-paradise, Kashmir.

If Nehru can paint such a picture, others are bound to produce many indifferent prints, blurred and out-of-focus. But none need be blamed for that. The land is, indeed, so "dramatic and varied" that such results are unavoidable. "Himalayan peaks, in the north," writes Emma Hawkrige, "hold the perpetual snow-line above seventeen thousand feet, and grow lush jungles on their lower slopes; a north-western desert glares like a copper wire; the tangled Vindhya hills cut the north of the triangle of India from the south—from the thin-aired plateau of the Deccan and the steamy palm-groves of the southern coasts whose inlets and harbours sparkle like spilled sacks of jewels...

Sky, space, colour, slow motion and bewildering variety, and the

ever-present sense of centuries emanating from the soil. Centuries have strewn cities of amazing beauty like drift-wood over the land—to be treasured in any other country; but here so numerous that they lie in wastes forgotten by all but archæologists. India, the cul-de-sac into which tribes and nations poured from the north-west before history began is as varied as the leaves of her own jungles...”

True, this fabulous land is no longer described as a “land of snake-charmers, of strange men who prefer to lie on beds of spikes, of people who worship cows; a land where child-marriages are common and widows throw themselves on their husband’s funeral pyres”. All the same, India continues to be a land of mystery, with a people, rather difficult to comprehend. Above all, to the eye, alike of the visitor and the native, it is a country of powerful contrasts—especially now, when the new is getting intermixed, so freely and so speedily, with the old. “When I try to sum up all these impressions,” says the Russian artist Gerasimov, “I get a mixture of modern civilization and engineering and the most primitive conditions of life: a superb automobile beside a big cart pulled by two bulls; numerous bicycles and a proud-stepping camel; European dresses and, in the south, half-naked people with coloured turbans; European-type shops and, in the old parts of the cities—small stalls with exotic fruit.” Similarly, the economist Woytinsky sees majesty and melancholy in this ‘cradle and tomb of so many civilizations’, and finds India ‘full of anachronisms, one of the world’s oldest civilizations and an infant nation emerging from political chaos’.

That is how it always goes. Historian or economist; artist or art-critic; naturalist or sociologist; scholar, statesman or poet; philosopher, trader or adventurer; friend, foe or neutral; big-game-hunter or fortune-seeker,—all wax eloquent in unusual combinations of colour and phrase, only to discover that India does not simplify, cannot be fitted into a cliché. Any attempt to do that is foredoomed. “We are talking about the atomic age while living in the cow-dung era,” said Nehru who was made by Gandhi to take to hand-spinning in the age of power-looms. A rigid

traditionalist, Gandhi, himself could say: "I do not subscribe to the superstition that everything is good because it is ancient. I do not believe either that anything is good because it is Indian". No, in India, there is nothing without its 'wheels within wheels.'

What, then, is the substance of all these vignettes and verdicts, yours, mine and his? Shorn of the adjectives—picturesque, colourful, incomparable, immortal, wonderful, glorious, divine, mystic, fabulous, ornate, unknown and what not—, and not dubbing the country as a land of wisdom or superstition, of sin or sunshine, of Maharajas or misery, of cobras or lions, of the God-intoxicated or the God-forsaken, of satis or sadhus, of dazzling days and scented nights, of snows, sands, seas, sleeping cities, of this and of that,—What is this India? At least this; that good, bad or indifferent, she is a country worth seeing, has a people worth understanding. Also, that, look at her whichever way you like, as an ardent admirer who gushes forth in ecstasy—"Oh, glorious land of India!"—or as a sober intellectual, any picture of India—of this "great and interesting country", as Karl Marx called it—is bound to get linked up with innumerable vital issues.

Of these vital issues, the one most worthy of serious examination was voiced in Nehru's *Discovery of India* twenty years ago: "Surely India could not have continued a cultured existence for thousands of years, if she had not possessed something very vital and enduring, something that was worthwhile. What was this something?" The question continues to be of interest, but there are no easy, ready-made answers. Speaking generally, most statements on India turn out to be mere restatements and what Strabo wrote 2,000 years ago remains more or less true: "We must hear accounts of India with indulgence, for not only is it very far away, but even those who have seen it, saw only some parts of it, and most of what they tell us is from hearsay." The best course is to see the country and to know her people directly, and form one's own judgement, even though one may be accused of doing what the four *blind* men of Hindostan did when they went to see an elephant.

General Information

Position & Area : INDIA also called Bharat. Lies in eastern hemisphere entirely to north of Equator between Longitudes 8° and $37^{\circ} 10'$ (north) and Longitudes 68° and $97^{\circ} 25'$ (east). Maximum length from northernmost point above Kashmir to land's end at Cape Comarin in south, nearly 2,000 miles. At its widest, east to west, between Assam and Rajasthan, about 1,850 miles. Total area approximately 12,60,000 sq. miles. Land frontier and coast-line roughly 9,400 and 3,500 miles respectively. In territorial extent world's 7th largest country, equal to two-thirds of Europe, one-half of U.S.A. and a score of Englands.

Neighbours : Immediate neighbouring countries, in the north, Sinkiang, Tibet, Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan; Pakistan both to the north-west, and to the east between the Indian Union States of West Bengal and Assam; Burma separated by a range of mountains, to the east; and to the south, Ceylon separated by the Gulf of Mannar and the Palk Strait.

Shape and Natural Regions: In Shape an irregular triangle with the Himalayas as base and Cape Comarin in the Indian Ocean as apex. Along the coasts on west and east, the Arabian sea and Bay of Bengal. Neat and compact geographical unit with three natural sub-divisions:—

- (i) **Himalayan Range**, in the north, stretching 1500 miles west to east with a varying depth of 150-200 miles. Contains some of world's highest peaks and most fertile and picturesque valleys like Kulu and Kashmir. Serving as frontier and guardian, effectively shuts off cold winds of the barren north and makes south-westerly monsoons yield rains; imparts a separate entity and consequently a distinctive culture to the country; contributes greatly to India's wealth of flora and fauna; provides many beauty spots and health resorts like Manali, Srinagar, Gulmarg, Simla, Mussoorie (of Dalai-Lama fame), Nainital, Darjeeling, Shillong.
- (ii) **Indo-Gangetic Plain**, the second region; one of world's greatest, most fertile and densely populated stretches of over-1300-feet thick alluvium. Nearly 1500 miles long, 150-200 miles broad; 3 distinct river systems, the Indus tributaries, the Ganges with tribu-

taries and the Brahmaputra. Remarkably homogeneous with little variation in relief; drop of only 700 feet in elevation over 1000 miles between Delhi and Bay of Bengal. Constitutes heart of India, the 'Hindustan', land of the Aryans, scene of innumerable battles, region where countless empires rose and fell. Strewn with famous cities like Amritsar, Delhi, Agra, Mathura, Sarnath, Allahabad, Varanasi, Lucknow, Patna, Calcutta, some possessing fabulous treasures of art and architecture.

(iii) **Deccan**, third region; southern, peninsular plateau with the Vindhya as base. Consists of highly meta-morphosed, crystalline rocks of earliest geological period. Several other mountain ranges, the Aravalis, Satpura, Ajanta, and the Ghats; several rivers Narmada, Tapti, Mahanadi, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri; cotton-bearing black soil in upper, northern portion; the southern part cut off by Nilgiri hills green and fertile; coffee plantations, dense forests. Much mineral wealth including gold at Kolar mines. Innumerable palaeolithic and neolithic finds; great achievements in arts. Dotted with important modern cities and historical sites, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore—perhaps India's most beautiful city, Hyderabad and Ajanta, Ellora, Sanchi, Mahabalipuram, Madura, Badami, Sravanabelgola, Hampi, Halebid, Ahmednagar, Trivandrum, Konarak, etc.

Climate : Notwithstanding "all the climates of the world", essentially monsoon tropical with local variations like winter rains. Rain an important factor of the scheme of things, determines the rhythm of Indian life. Arid areas of little rain and those like the West Coast, West Bengal, Assam and part of Himalayan range, with heavy rainfall. Cherrapunji in Assam with average annual of 425 inches, world's wettest place.

Seasons : Four seasons according to Indian Meteorological Department; six of older Hindu traditions; but generally three: Winter—October to February with low rainfall; Summer—March to June, beginning or middle, generally dry; Rainy Season—beginning or middle-June to September. Winter in north, bracing, can be really cold. In south, practically no cold weather.

Flora and Fauna: Range and diversity of climatic conditions reflected in great wealth and variety of flowers, shrubs, trees, herbs and plants of great medicinal value, fruit and vegetables, and birds, animals, fishes, reptiles and insects. Among trees and shrubs and flowers the Gul Mohur, Flame of the Forest, Asoka, Nim, Teak, Babul, Banyan, Peepal, Casuarina, Deodar, Bamboo, Sal, Ebony, Rauwolfia Serpentina, (good for the heart), Rhododendron, Heavenly blue, Peacock Flower, Golden shower, Moon beams, Golden drop, the Rose, the Jasmine, *Surya Mukhi*, Marigold, *Rat-ki-Rani*, *Har-Singar*, *Ishk Paithan* and that sacred flower and symbol of India, the 'Lotus'.

Fruits: Include the mango, apple, pine-apple, custard-apple, peach, apricot, fig, melon, guava, plantain, papita, orange, citron, lime.

Vegetables: Potato, tomato, peas, brinjal, cauliflowers, radishes, onions, yams, turnips, garlic, cabbages, lettuces, lady-fingers and many others.

Birds: Rich diversity; splendid and curious species; some in nature's gayest attire, others lively, singing, talking and dancing; and fierce birds of prey; parrot, mynah, bulbul, crow, sparrow, pigeon, peacock, pheasants, snipes, partridges, kingfishers, vultures, eagles, falcons, hawks, flamingo, great Indian bustard, jungle-fowl, duck, pelican, quail, plover, teal, sheldrake, numerous water-fowls.

Animals: Zoologists' and hunters' paradise; wild dogs, wild hogs, wild asses, wild buffalo, rhinoceros—one-horned and two-horned—tigers, lions, sheep and goats, nilgai, elephants bison, antelope, black bear, sloth bear, ibex, chinkara panther, langur, sambhar and chital deer (the spotted variety, India's most beautiful animal). Sanctuaries for lions (Gir), for elephants (in Kerala), for Rhinos (in Assam); big game-hunting adventures possible.

Fishes: Over 3000 varieties; the mahaeser, trout, hilsa, whale-shark, sail-fish, carps, cat-fish; good fishing available.

Insects: Innumerable varieties, some in resplendent hues; both kinds—obnoxious like mosquito and showy like the butter-fly. Useful insects include the silk-worm, honey-bee and the lac-producing kind.

Crops and Mineral: Wealth and variety of both. Crops (including cash crops); wheat, rice, millets, sugar-cane, oil-seeds, pulses, spices, palms (toddy, date, coconut, arecanut) tobacco, cotton, coffee, rubber, indigo, jute.

Minerals: Abundance of bauxite, manganese, mica, iron, (world's largest deposits) refractory minerals, steatite, silica and fire-clays; gold, coal, aluminium, chrome ore, rare earth sufficient for our requirements. Beryl and Morazite—atomic minerals—also available.

Political Divisions & Administrative Set-up: Sovereign, democratic, secular republic. Indian Union, a federal structure, comprising territories of Andhra Pradesh (Capital Hyderabad); Assam (Shillong); Bihar (Patna); Bombay (Bombay); Jammu & Kashmir (Srinagar); Kerala (Trivandrum); Madhya Pradesh (Bhopal), Madras (Madras) Mysore (Bangalore); Orissa (Bhubaneshwar) Punjab (Chandigarh); Rajasthan (Jaipur); Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow); West Bengal (Calcutta); and centrally administered areas of Delhi (Headquarters Delhi); Himachal Pradesh (Simla); Manipur (Imphal); Tripura (Agartala); the Andamans & Nicobar islands in the Bay of Bengal (Port Blair) and the Laccadiva, Minicoy, and Admlnidive islands in the Arabian Sea (Kozhikode).

Union executive consists of the President (present incumbent: Dr. Rajendra Prasad), Vice-President (Dr. S. Radhakrishnan) and the Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister (Sh. Jawaharlal Nehru) at its head.

The legislature of the Union, called *Parliament*, consists of the President and the two Houses known as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and the House of the People (Lok Sabha).

Similar system of Government in the States; State executive: Governor and Council of Ministers with a Chief Minister; single-House or two-House legislature for every State.

National Flag: Horizontal tricolour, a deep saffron band on top, white in the middle and dark green at bottom in equal proportions. In centre of white band, on either side, 24-spoked wheel in navy blue designed after wheel of Asoka's Lion capital at Sarnath. According to Vice-President Radhakrishnan, saffron denotes renunciation, green signifies relation to plant life on which all other life depends; white in the centre is light, path of truth to guide conduct; Asoka's wheel in centre is wheel of law or 'dharma' and signifies dynamism and peaceful change.

National Emblem: Also an adaptation from the Sarnath Capital. Three lions upon an abacus of wheel flanked by bull and horse. *State Motto* 'Satyam ev Jayate'—'Truth alone triumphs' inscribed underneath in Devanagari script.

National Anthem: Rabindranath Tagore's famous song, 'Jana-gana-mana'; although Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's popular invocation, 'Vande Matram' accorded equal status. First stanza of National Anthem usually sung or played on public functions. Opening lines:

"Jana-gana-mana-adhinayak jaya hei
Bharatabhagya-vidhata"

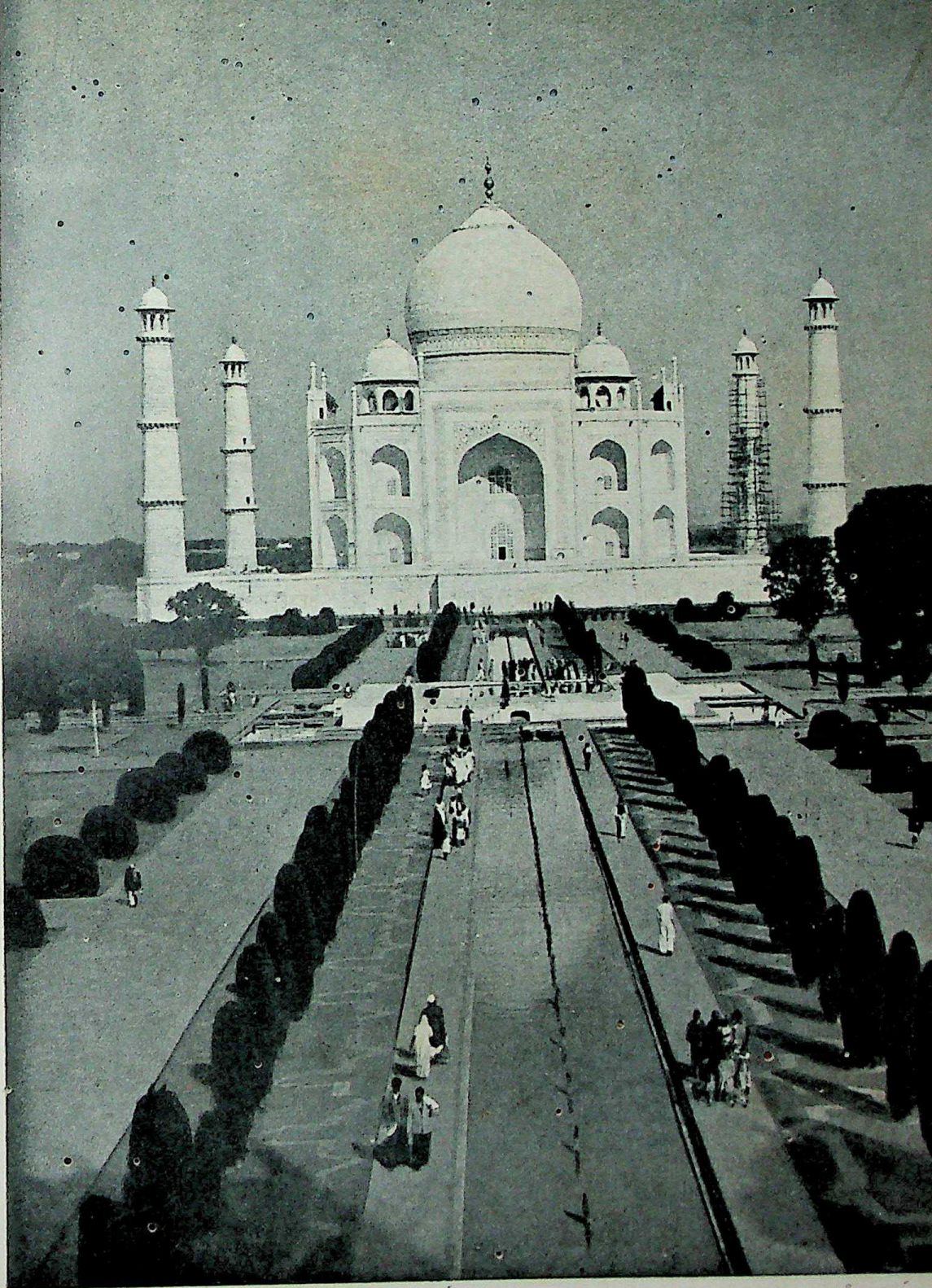
Thou art the ruler of the minds of all people,
Thou Dispenser of India's destiny. Victory to Thee.



The Qutub Minar, Delhi : This 238 ft. high, 12th. C. sandstone-cum-marble tower is one of the most perfect in the world and affords a magnificent view of the Capital.



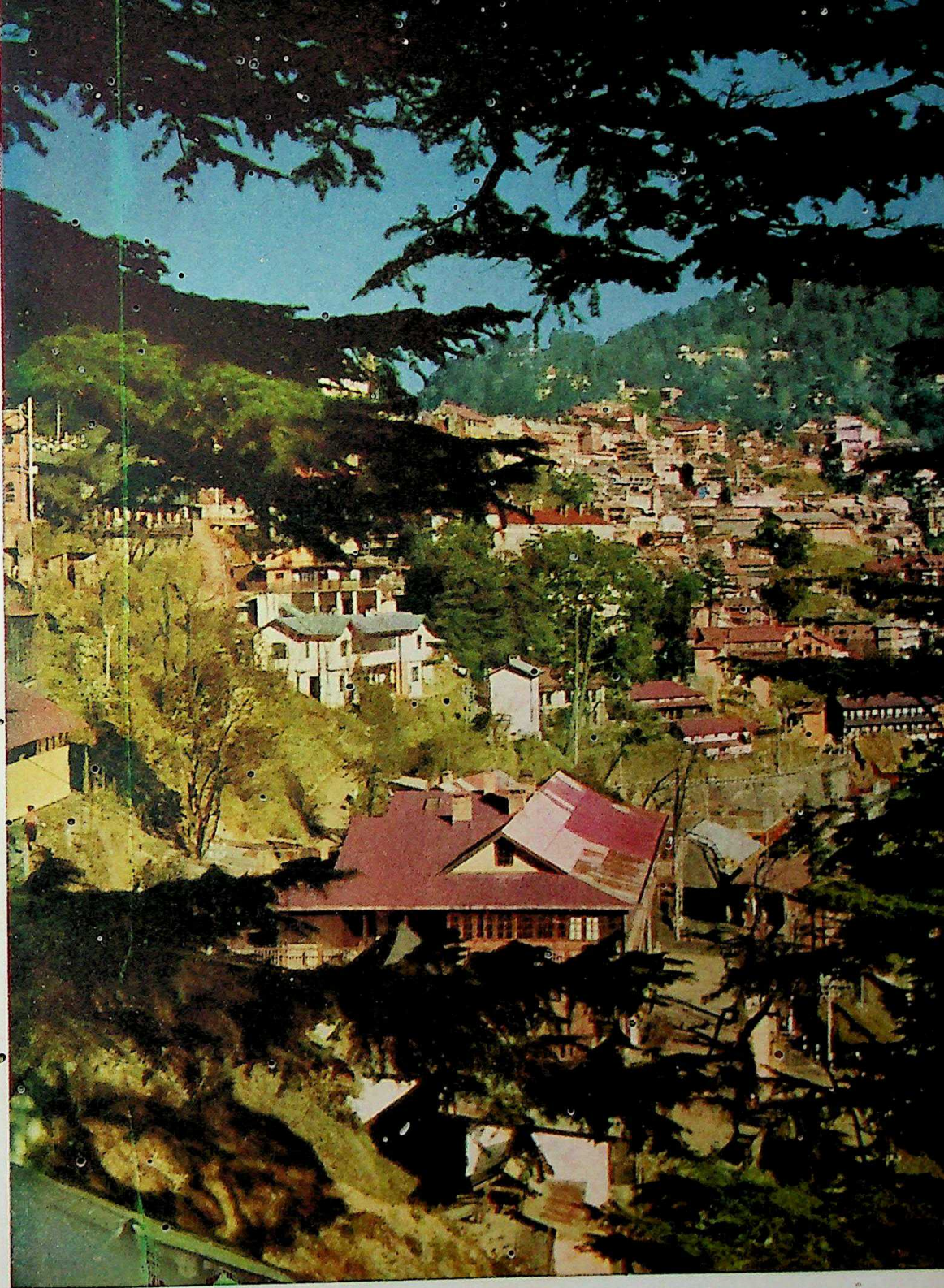
Victoria Memorial, Calcutta : The finest building and a most stately landmark of the City. It was built by Lord Curzon to serve as a Memorial and Museum associated with Queen Victoria °



The Taj, Agra : 'Come to India , the Taj alone is worth it'. Royalty's immortal tribute to Love, the Taj Mahal is the world's most beautiful mausoleum.



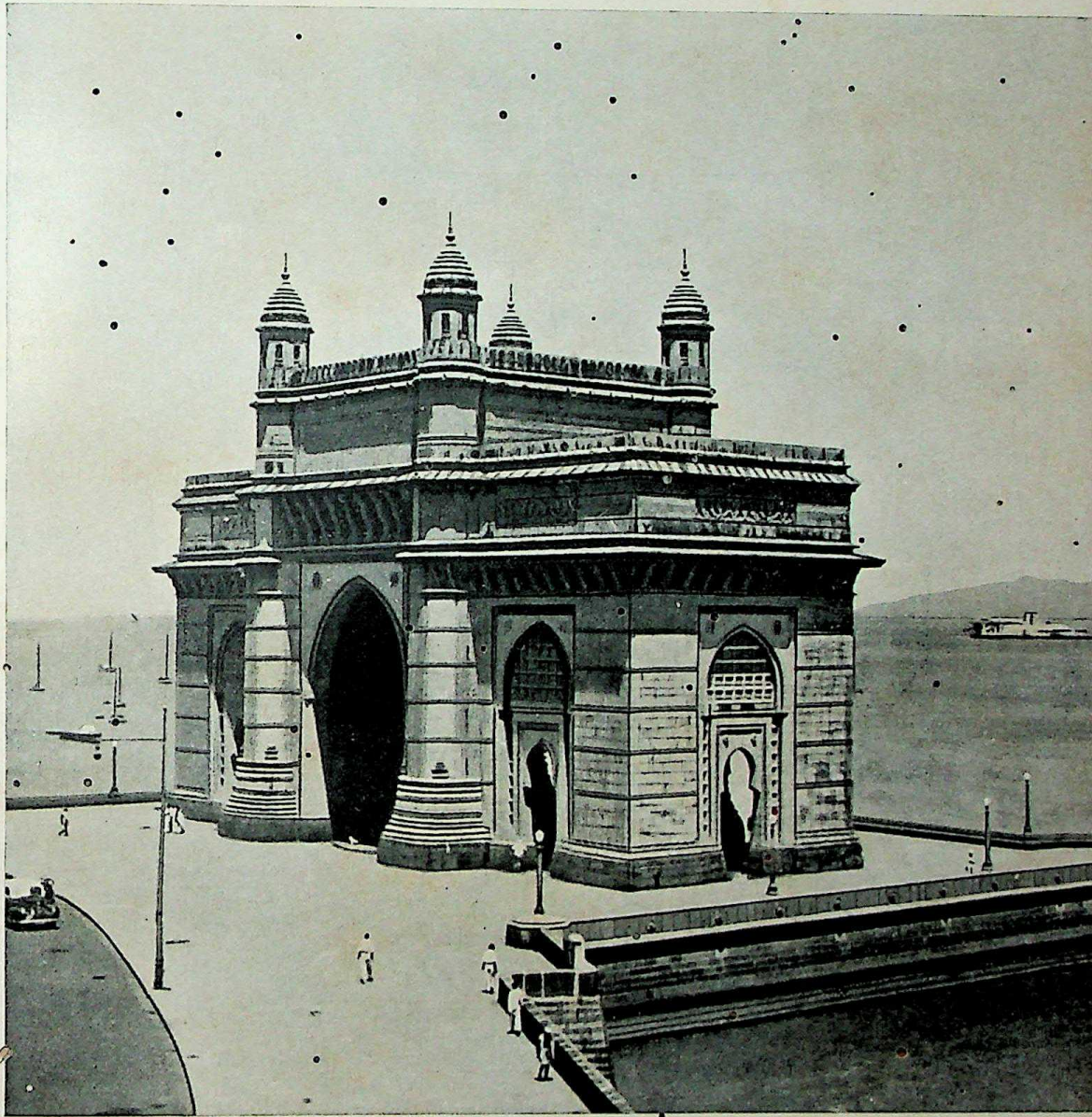
Red Fort (Delhi Gate): Shah Jahan's Red Fort is Delhi's most important historical monument. From its ramparts, India's Prime Minister unfurls the National Flag on Independence Day.



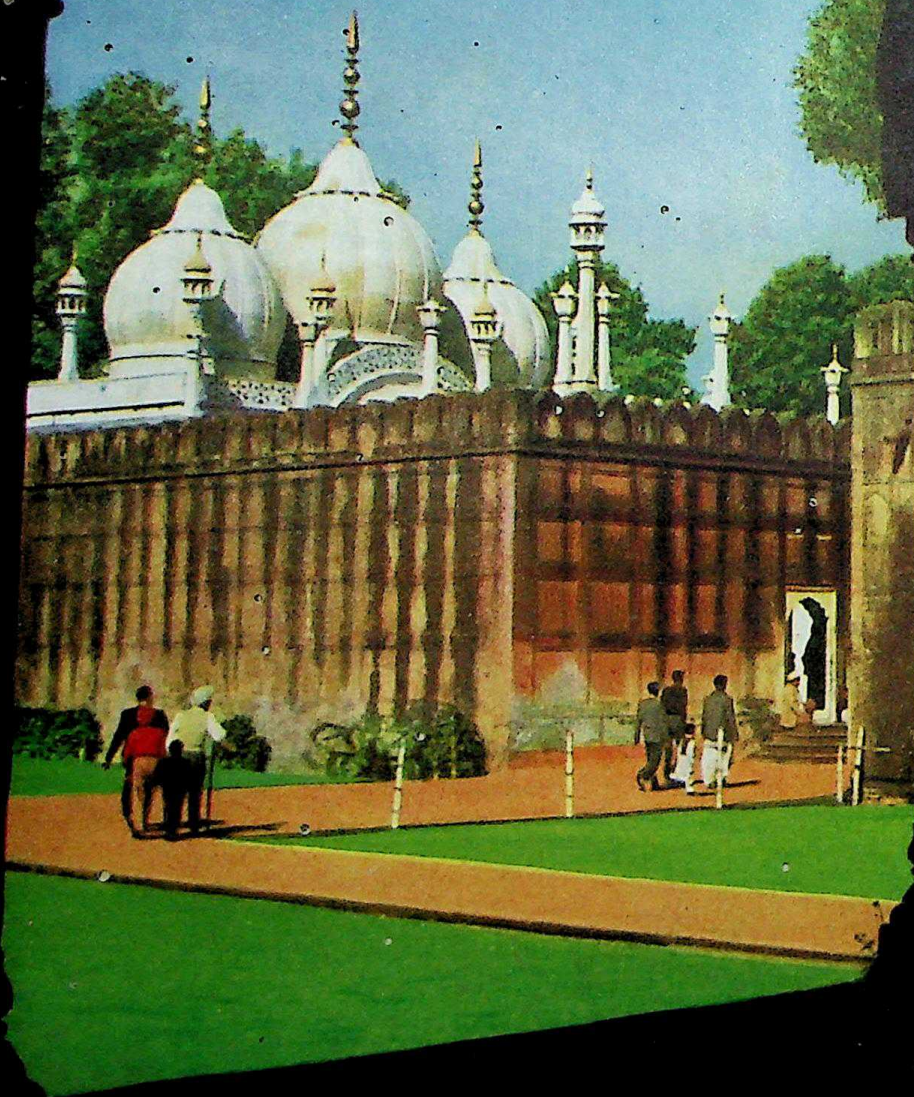
Picturesque Simla : Once the winter capital of the Central Government, Simla, 7,000 ft. above sea-level, is one of the finest hill-stations of the country and the most popular in northern India.



In Kulu Valley : Somewhere in the valley of Kulu, which for her scenic beauty and bracing climate rivals the vale of Kashmir. Both are situate in northern India.



- **Gateway of India, Bombay :** Built especially that a king may land, this monument commemorates the visit to India in 1911 of King George V & Queen Mary.



Moti Masjid, Red Fort, Delhi : The exquisite all-marble Pearl Mosque was built by Emperor Aurangzeb. • Its graceful domes were covered originally with gilded copper-plate.



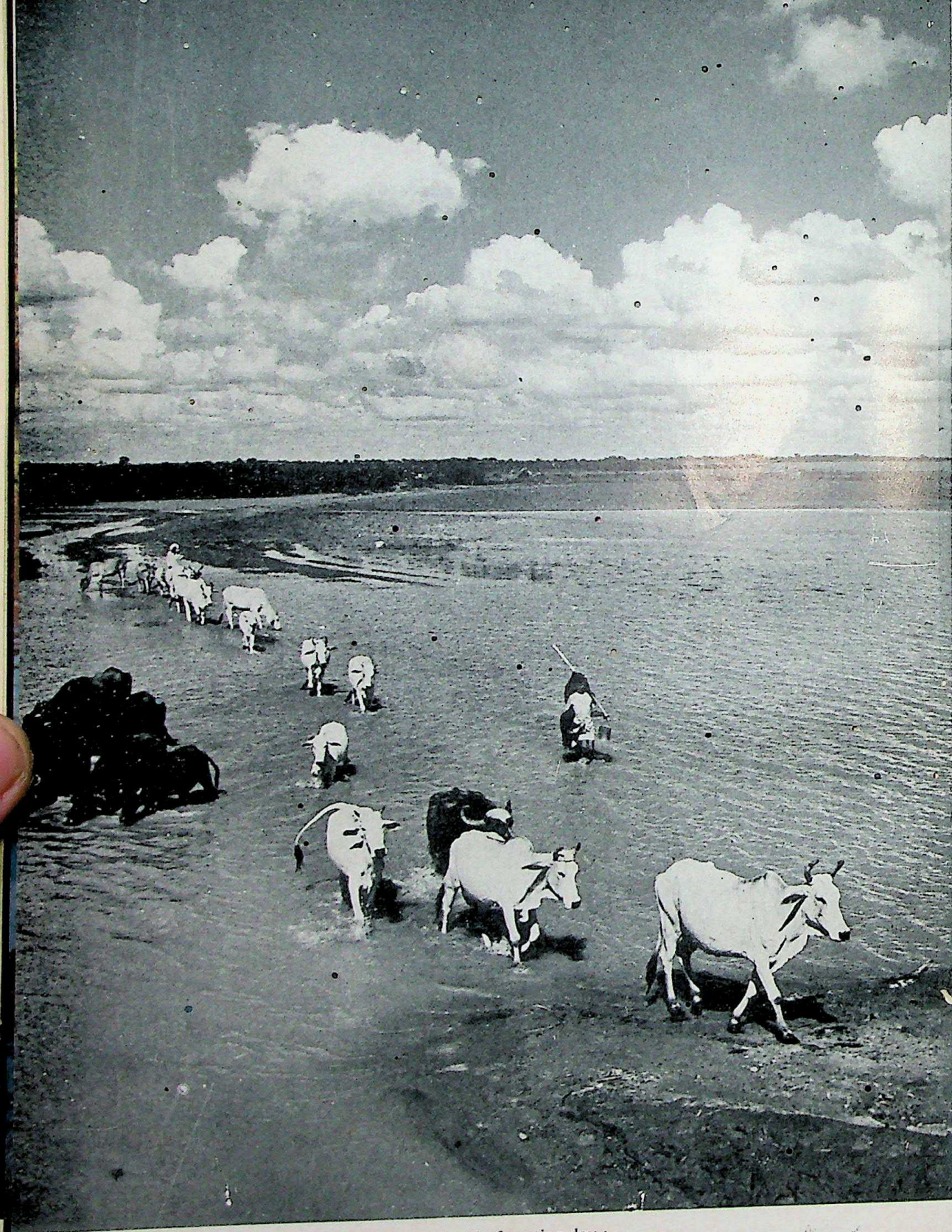
Paddy Cultivation : Men do not live by monuments nor by landscapes. They need food which for millions in India means Rice. The colourful background denotes the presence of a V.I.P.



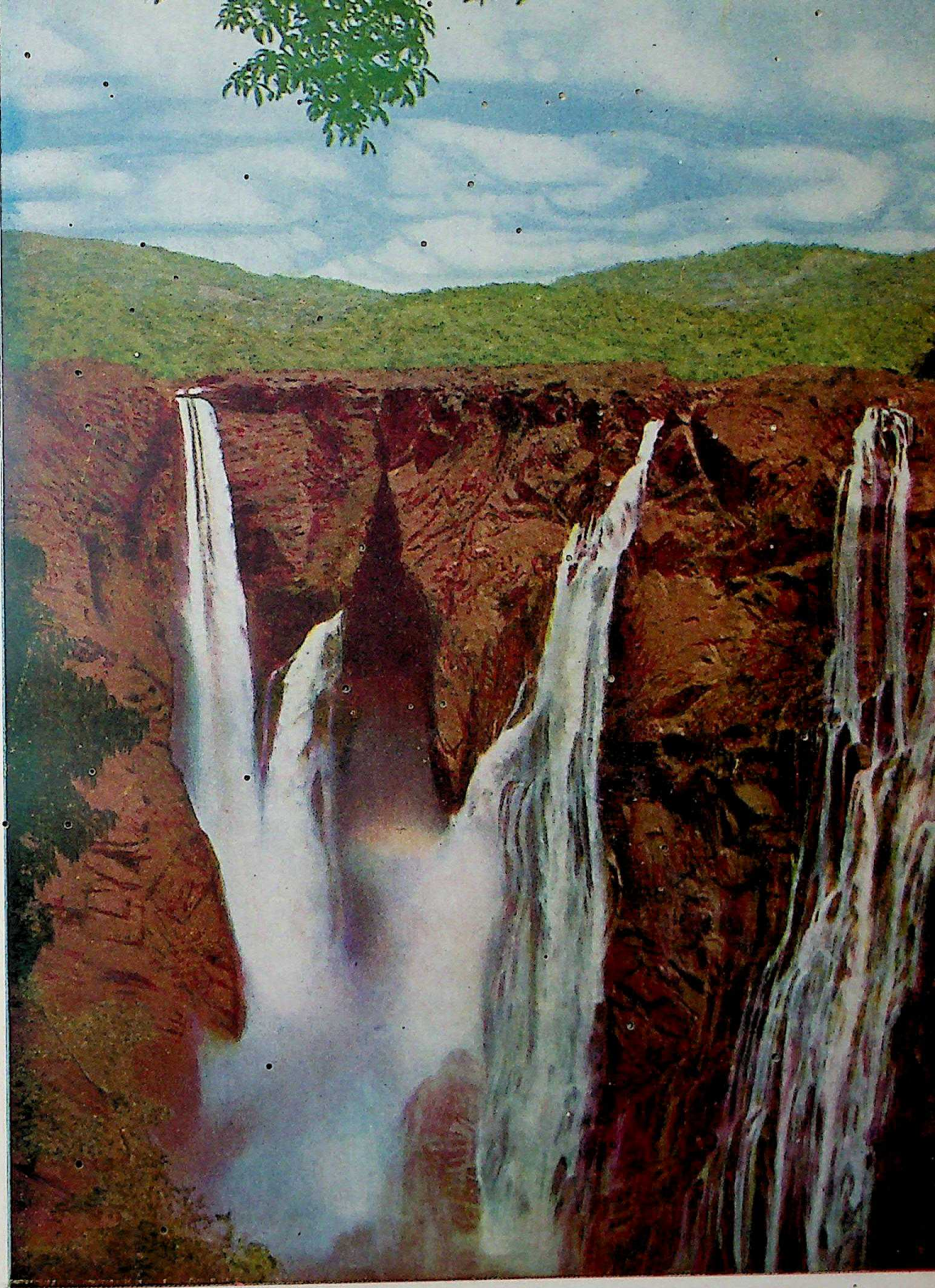
To the Market : In rural Bengal the watercourses are used extensively for inland travel. The landscape and the figures are typical of the countryside in the State.



Symbols : A bleak and barren outlook, the naked child, the poor and hard-working peasant mother. But the horizon holds the clouds—India's symbol of hope !



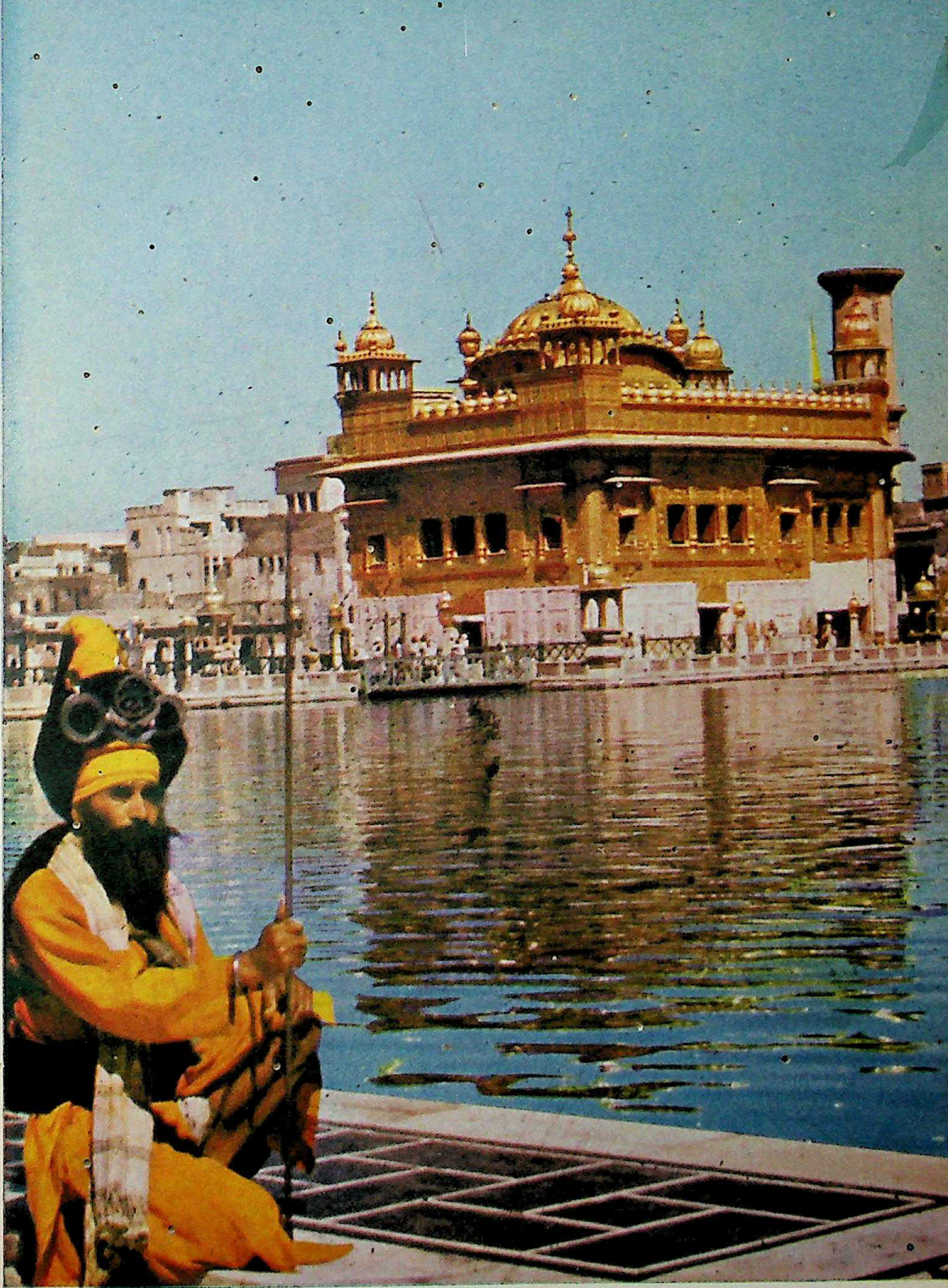
Homeward Bound : "The curfew tolls the knell of parting day ;
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea".
(Thomas Gray)



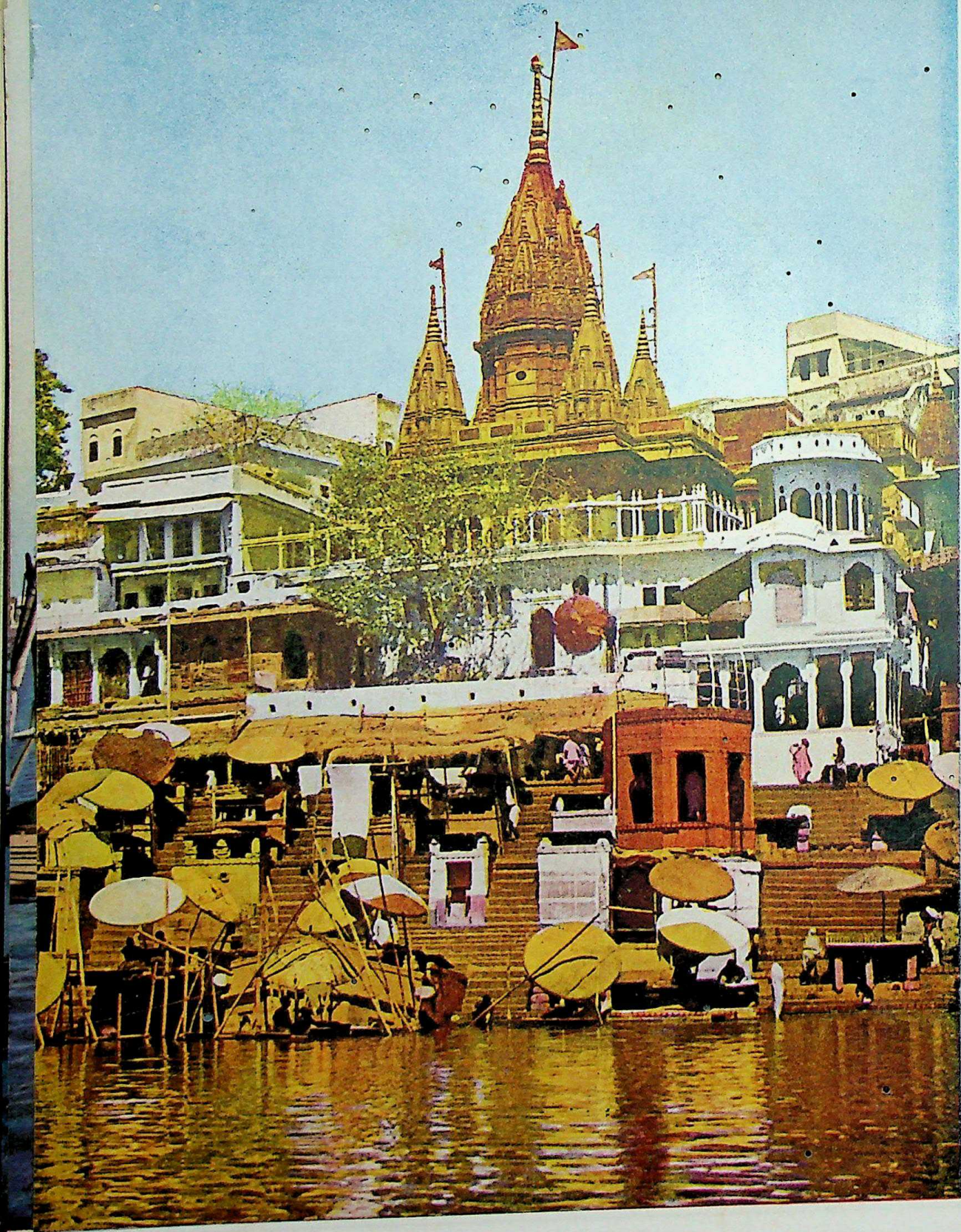
Jog Falls (Mysore) : The Raja, the Rani, the Roarer and the Rocket—in four cascades of unrivalled grandeur falls the river Sharavati over a steep descent of 820 ft.



Bombay Harbour: Quaint country-craft and modern steamers in India's finest harbour. Whether they make for queer anachronisms or colourful contrasts, both have their place and usefulness.



Golden Temple, Amritsar : The celebrated and most sacred shrine of the Sikhs. The gilded building stands in the centre of the holy 'Pool of Nectar'.



River Front & Ghats Varanasi (Benares) : Of the holy cities of the Hindus, Varanasi is the holiest, and a dip in the Ganges constitutes an act of piety which is full of merit.

The People

India; as Henrik Van Loon remarks very profoundly, is full of Indians. Tall or small, dark or fair, advanced or primitive, D.Sc's and F.R.C.S's or entirely innocent of any lettered knowledge, dressed for a coronation or wholly naked, villager or townsman, Aryan or Dravidian, Hindu or Parsees, Nagas or Baniyas, Kashmiris or Oriyas, ex-rulers or ex-rebels, starched or starved, communists or capitalists, this, that or the other—they are all Indians. It is true that the country constitutes a racial mosaic; a museum of religions, a living show where the panorama of man's full history, complete with its various ages and stages of culture and civilization, may be viewed at one go. Nevertheless, despite apparent differences, the human beings who inhabit this vast area called India are bound together, have some kind of deep underlying unity, a characteristic, intangible "something" which differentiates them from others, marks them as Indians. So that whatever these forty million people might do, and however they might live, and wherever they might go, that sense of 'belonging' is always there. Whether they fly in supersonic jet-planes or ride in jolting bullock-carts; drink *bhang* or sip cock-tails; play on the *mridang* or the piano; dance the Bharat Natyam or the Rock-en-Roll; live with their cattle in a thatched hut or with their sleek Alsations and lap-dogs in bungalows designed by Le Corbusair; recite the *Gayatri* or read *Lolita*; go to the temple and worship the *sivalingam*, or swear by the stock-exchange and patronise the race-course; speak the language which was spoken by the country's first forgotten inhabitants or rattle out modern political, economic, sociological and scientific theories with an immaculate, Oxford accent,—do as

they will and behave as they can, they are and remain the children of this mother of them all—India. Something there is that brings them together, makes them one. Not the national anthem, nor the flag—for these are toys of a recent make; but something deeper, something less perishable than cloth and colour and word and name, something that appears to be almost without beginning and is likely to be without end.

Romain Rolland once dedicated a book "to the land of glory and of servility, to the land of impermanent empires and of eternally glorious thoughts, to the peoples who bid defiance to Time". And these 'peoples who bid defiance to Time' are not to be ticked off lightly as 'Indians' who live in 'India'. For India has had many names, 'Aryavarta' and 'Bharat Varsha' and 'Hindustan' and all that; and many flags have fluttered in her winds and been blown away into oblivion, into the debris of history. India knows that 'countries' can be created and mutilated as they have been created and mutilated. No, that something which has made this country endure, made her peoples survive as a people, is different, is something which seems to transcend the political, the provisional and the transient. After all, it is the people who make the country, who, in a sense, are the country. Man is interested in man, not in rocks and rivers. However majestic the Himalayas, however holy the Ganges, heart-delighting the monsoon clouds or soul-stirring the splendour of the rising sun, man's first concern is with man. Confronted as man is with the possibility, through scientific engines of his own invention, of total extinction, it is perhaps possible to imagine the rivers coursing down from their mountain sources to the sunlit sea, with not a soul to need their waters, and the fertile fields all ripe and ready waiting endlessly for the reapers who will never come. But such an exercise of imagination is of academic value only. It may be true that "from the cosmic perspective life is a by-product, a minor detail in a large scheme with no definite or direct relations to our hopes and fears", and that "the stars in their courses are plainly about some other business"; but from the human point of view, life is large and real; in fact, at times, terribly real.

However, to revert to the Indian scene, there are these people, the Indians, speaking different languages, wearing dissimilar dresses, professing several religions, belonging to many races,—and all that seems bewildering and baffling to the average visitor. He finds it difficult to accept the essential 'Indianness' of the inhabitants and fails to notice that tremendous impress of oneness which, in spite of an infinite variety and superficial dissimilarity, has held all of them together for ages past, whatever the conditions of life. The amazing diversity of race and religion, of language and costume, suggests to him, through an association of ideas, the European tower of babel and jumble of nations. And the analogy is often carried to the logical end of believing that, like Europe, India is many countries, several nations. The Oriental, on the other hand, whose mind has been reared in the philosophy of the many-in-one and of the one-in-many, knows and understands the illusion of the white radiance of eternity manifesting itself in different colours, is amused by the westerner's confusion, and passes on !

Of course, the diversity is tremendous. To quote William Moniers : "India is an epitome of the world...all the principal races of the world are represented here : the Caucasian, the Mongolian, and even the Negro, some of the aboriginal hill tribes being manifestly either negroid or negrito. All races are more or less blended, yet Brahmans, Rajputs, Jats, Baniyas, Sudras and hill tribes differ as much *inter se* as Greeks, Italians, Saxons, Slavs, Celts, Finns, and Lapps.

And just as all races are represented, so are all families of languages.

Again, as all races and families of languages are represented in India, so are the four principal religious creeds in the world—namely Brahmanism or Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam or Moham-madenism and Christianity”.

Spate comments on this queer hotchpotch thus : “That the diversity of the peoples of India baffles description is a commonplace. Only less frequent is the observation that there is an underlying—or

overlaying—cultural unity. This is undoubtedly true of the Indian Union : everywhere, except in some remote Himalayan and jungle areas, the structure of society and the architectural landscape bear the strong impress of Hinduism..:In fact it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the only considerable groups with a culture not subsumed into or at least strongly influenced by Hinduism are the hill-men of Western Pakistan, some of the Assam border tribes, and the Buddhists of Ladakh or 'Little Tibet' ". That explains why these "peoples of mystery, of no less than seven physical types," do not mind if "the Norwegian and the Greek are far more akin than the Rajput and the Madrassi, although both profess the same religion". They know that beneath their skins, in their blood, they have the same "underlying—or overlaying—cultural unity" and an essential sameliness of spirit.

Ethnic stocks, linguistic babble, castes and creeds—to the modern ear these phrases sound dull and jarring, and perhaps, the concepts they represent are no longer interesting. Not so, however, the fourth great differentiator—costumes. Here, at least, the diversity should be welcome for it helps to create the 'colourful' India so very much liked by one and all. "It should be borne in mind," says Kay Ambrose, "that there is no dress or detail of a costume in the world which cannot be found in some sort in India, from frank, bare skin to a furry esquimau". This is literally true, and has been true throughout these centuries. Looking at the paintings in Ajanta's Caves, one is startled by the appearance on those walls of what one had all along believed to be modern hair-styles and latest head-dresses originating from Hollywood. There are, too, in those old pictures items like socks and scarfs and shorts which one had thought Baden Powell had imported into India for the use of the Scouts ! Indeed, a foreigner is likely to notice the diversity of the Indian clothing before he learns much else about the country or her people. On a great occasion like the Independence Day or Republic Day celebrations in Delhi, or at a big fair or exhibition in the Capital, or at the Kumbha at Allahabad, or in a popular hill-station, or on the platforms of any important Railway junction, one may mark almost all the sartorial variety, the entire wardrobe of

the country. The *Choli*, the *Lahnga*, the *Salwar*, the *Kameez*, the *Sari* worn in various styles, the modern blouse and the skirt, the *Kurta* and the pyjamas, the *Dupatta* and the *Orhani*, the Jacket and the *Ghoongat* of the women of various regions ; and all that is possible to put on in male garments, ranging between the birthday suit of a *Sadhu* whose total additional dress consists of ashes or perhaps a rosary, and the robes of the swanky son of a westernised plutocrat who orders his attire at the world's most fashionable clothiers. The permutations and combinations are, virtually, too numerous to count.

But more than the variety, what strikes the eye most is the colour-splash, of a sort of a perpetual holiday-costuming, which an Indian group, especially of women, flaunts. Of women let women speak : "By day", writes Emma Harkridge, "the sun lives in colours that women and men know how to wear ; it clarifies the silks of flame, apricot, turquoise, lemon and lavender of a group . strolling to their tryst under a banyan tree ; it burns in the smouldering reds and oranges of women in Agra and Jaipur with triangular swishing skirts and clashing silver anklets ; and enriches the dusky wines and grape purples tucked between the legs of the women of the Deccan..." "Perhaps the visual charm of India comes from grace of movement—low-caste women in the fields in their wisps of red, supplely bending, all of a motion to the ground; or women who walk like slow passing friezes, carrying on their heads loads of copper jars or trays of dung-cakes, as proudly as dancers". Visitor after foreign visitor has had the same impression of women brightly clothed and moving like queens. "The figure of the Hindu woman", remarks Margaret Mordecai, "is indeed her greatest beauty, and it is so little concealed that there is no reason for evasion or doubt. All the women seem to have good, one might often say, perfect figures. They are all straight, all hold themselves admirably, and whether they are slender or of voluptuously rounded proportions, they are always models of ease and grace." And, she continues, "The Hindu woman is one of the few women of the world, who is always *en toilette*..... The Indian woman enjoys perfect ease in her costume, and no matter how poor she may be, she is always artistically draped."

But costumes are just one item and women only a part of the population. What is the Indian, in general, like? What kind of people are these teeming millions who crawl between this piece of earth and heaven, or go about saying, "Aham Brahm"—"I am God", as simply as if they were wishing you good morning? Once again, the answer is not simple, no easy matter.

Some say that being agrarian to the core, India must be seen in her villages, that her peasants are her people. And what of these peasants? The unlettered, superstitious, backward, "hungry, emaciated and with torn clothing, meek and humble beyond words," idol-worshipping, unhygienic, beasts-of-burden—is that the correct picture? Or what C.F. Andrews declared: "These patient villagers have a religious culture of their own, which often reaches remarkable heights of spiritual vision.....The poets of India usually come from these country homes. Great religious leaders have risen from them and left their names bright in the pages of Indian history..... Out of their rugged stock all that is best in India has been produced, from one generation to another, to the great enrichment of mankind."

There is no doubt that there is grinding poverty and deplorable back-wardness all around, not only in the villages but in the towns as well. And the Indian people, men, women and children, are far from being in a good way. Yet they have retained their old personality intact, just as they have preserved so many other things. "What were the Indians like in (those) ancient days?" asks Nehru and answers: "They were a light-hearted race, confident and proud of their traditions, dabbling in the search for the mysterious, full of questions addressed to nature and human life, attaching importance to the standards and values they had created, but taking life easily and joyously, and facing death without much concern. Arrian, the Greek historian, was struck by this light-heartedness of the race. 'No nation', he writes, 'is fonder of singing and dancing than the Indian.'"

Under their miserable rags, and beneath their cares of the day, the Indians continue to be, basically, the same old people—light-hearted, confident, joyous, fond of singing and dancing.

General Information

Population : After China, India world's second most-populated country ; contains approximately 415 million ; mean growth rate of 5 million per annum so that population at end of century expected between 600 & 6 million. Varying density of population with average of over 900 per sq. mile in Kerala and 54 in Jammu and Kashmir ; over-all average nearly 330 per sq. mile six times of world's average. Average life expectancy : 33 ; proportion of persons aged 55 and above, 8.3%. Sex ratio about 950 females per 1000 males ; Rural population 82 % spread over 5,50,000 villages (3,80,000 with less than 500 population) ; urban population 18% in over 3,000 towns and townships, (40 above one lakh population). 70% of population engaged in Agriculture ; 10% in Industries or non-agricultural production ; 6% in Commerce ; 2% in Transport ; 12% in Services and miscellaneous professions.

Racial Stocks : Several groups having entered the country at different stages of history, many racial strains and complex, confusing intermixture. Broadly speaking, of the six racial groups, Negrito, Australoid, Mongoloid mainly tribal, though not confined to tribes alone. Caucasoid-Mediterranean-type found in the south—the ancient Dravidian stock being-Mediterraneans and Proto-Australoids. The blond or partially blond nordic elements constitute bulk of population in the montane valleys of northern and north-western India. The western Brachycephalic types mingled with the Mediterraneans, moving south and east. However, all these generalisations and approximations ; and different strains and interfusion found all over, with almost-blond in Maharashtra and south, and 'Kalabhoos'—"black-black"—in the north.

Religions : As secular State, no official religion but right to worship and freedom to follow any faith, fundamentals of constitution. Hinduism predominant faith. Distribution of population on the basis of religions : Hindus 84.99% ; Muslims 9.93% ; Christians 2.30% ; Sikhs 1.74% ; Jains 0.45% ; Buddhists 0.06% ; Zoroastrians 0.03% ; Other (tribal) religions 0.47% ; other (non-tribal) religions 0.03% ; Brief explanatory notes on important faiths follow :

Hinduism : "Incredibly complex, hardly definable, but always easily recognisable". Defined as "those beliefs held by Hindus!"

Gandhi : "search after truth through non-violent means". "A way of life rather than a creed, a philosophical system rather than a codified religion". Beliefs held range from rank atheism and worship of spirits to pantheism.

Essentials of orthodox Hinduism : One Supreme Being approachable through many gods who represent His aspects and qualities ; belief in rebirth and doctrine of 'Karma' ; vegetarianism (even though the habit of meat eating, not beef, is growing) ; respect for the cow, the Ganges, the caste system ; prescribed rites and rituals, etc.

Islam : Founded by Mohammad (D.632 A.D.). The Arabic word Islam means "resignation to the will of God", and the creed may be summed up simply, thus—there is no God but God, and Mohammad is the apostle of God", A strictly monotheistic religion and, within the fold, most democratic, believing all Muslims as brethren, and equal in the sight of God. The holy Koran, revealed to the prophet, sacred book. Two main divisions ; *Sunnis* maintaining Caliphate as elective, and *Shias* regarding it as hereditary through the Prophet's son-in-law, Ali. Prayers five times a day and a month's fast (in Ramzan) every year enjoined on each devout Muslim. As against Hindus who cremate, Muslims bury their dead.

Christianity : Although Christianity introduced in the country about 50 A.D. by St. Thomas, one of the 12 apostles of Christ, who preached at Taxila and later in South India, many converts of recent (British) times. Of the two main sects, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, traditions of the older church preserved mainly in South India.

Sikhism : Three religions, Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism founded as creeds intending to reforms Hinduism, as reaction and protest against growing evils. Sikhism, in point of time the last, has the largest following. Essentially an off-shoot of Hinduism ; its founder Guru Nanak, (1469-1539) revered equally by Hindus. Nanak's teachings, as also those of the nine Gurus who followed, collected in the Sikh

scriptures called 'Grantha Sahib'. The tenth and last Guru Gobind Singh, (1666-1708) welded the Sikhs into a militant community and instituted the 'Khalsa'—the 'Chosen'. Use of 'five K's: the Kesh—long unshaven hair; the Kangha—a comb; the Kara—an iron bangle; the Kirpan—a sword, and the Kachha—a pair of drawers—shorts reaching up to the knees. Bulk of the Sikh population concentrated in Panjab.

Jainism: Though believed to be of much greater antiquity, founded by Vardhamana Mahavira, (599-527 B.C.) the 24th "Tirthankara" who belonged like Buddha to the Kshatrya caste of Hinduism; his creed, like Buddha's, a revolt against "Brahminism". Jains emphasis Ahimsa to the extent that the orthodox keep their mouths covered in order to avoid breathing-in and consequent destruction of minute insects.

Two main sects: the *Digambaras* (sky-clad), nude and unencumbered by material things, and *Svetambaras* (white-clad). A small, usually wealthy community, residing mainly in Rajasthan and Bombay, with Mt. Abu as their holy place. Many Jains traders and financiers; Marwari Chambers of Commerce powerful.

Buddhism: Of the faiths founded as reaction against the domination of the Hindu Brahmins, Buddhism the greatest, but hardly survives in India. Siddhartha, later the Buddha, (563-483 B.C.) realising that life was illusion and suffering renounced the world, believed that in 'Nirwan'—salvation—alone real freedom from the ills of life; taught "right faith, right conduct and right action", stressed 'ahimsa'—non-violence, love and brotherhood, Emperor Asoka in whose reign Buddhism became India's state religion sent missionaries to spread the creed abroad. With the revival of Hinduism, first under the Guptas and later on through the efforts and reforming zeal of Shankaracharya, Buddhism declined rapidly, though most of the countries to India's south, north and east, have predominantly Buddhist population.

Zoroastrianism: The faith of the Parsees; Founder Zoroaster, in Persia, somewhere between 1000 B.C. and 600 B.C. Because of religious persecution, the Parsees migrated from their homeland Iran to India in 7th C.A.D.; now live as a wealthy and friendly community in and around Bombay. Reputed for their acts of charity; believe in a 'reckoning-after death' and therefore following the path of 'Asha'—of good thoughts, good words and good deeds; worship the fire; and have their dead exposed to the open, in their "towers of silence".

Languages: A total of 845 languages or dialects including 720 languages or dialects spoken by less than a lakh persons each and one by 2 persons only; 63 non-Indian languages.

91% speak one or the other of the fourteen languages specified in the constitution: Hindi (Urdu and Panjabi) 46.3%; Telugu—10.2%; Marathi—8.3%; Tamil—8.2%; Bengali—7.8%; Gujarati—5%; Kannada—4.5%; Malayalam—4.1%; Oriya—4.1%; Assamese—1.5%; Kashmiri—about 1%.

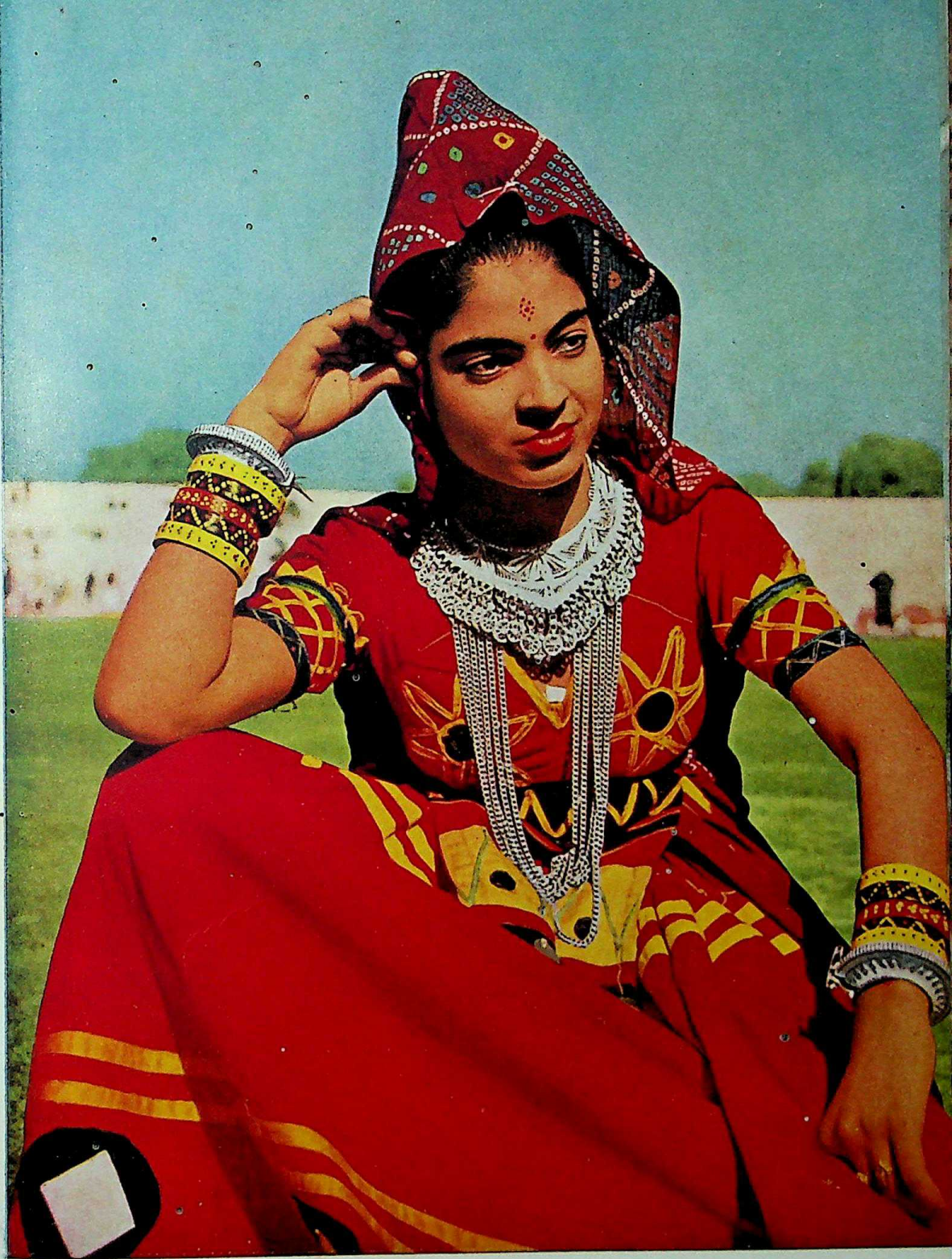
Hindi with the Devnagari script declared the National language. English official language till 1965, or later. Expected to continue, after Hindi becomes the official language, as an associate, secondary official language of the Central Government.

Of the various scripts, all except Urdu, go from left to right. Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Gujarati—the Sanskrit family of languages similar in their script as also. Assamese follows the Bengali script Oriya a corrupt form of latter, different. Languages of the south, of Dravidian origin, form 2 groups; Kannada, and Telugu; Tamil and Malayalam.

Costumes: Dhoti and Sari most common dresses of Indian men and women respectively. *Dhoti*—a 4-5 yds. piece of white muslin or silk covers the body waist-downwards. A variation of the Dhoti is *Lungi* (or *Majhla*); much shorter length; wrapped round the waist; popular with the peasants. The Sari varying in length between 5-9 yds; "the most graceful feminine garment in the world"; requires skill in donning; usually worn over a petticoat with one end tucked into the waist band and then wrapped round forming pleats. Other end carried over the shoulder and may cover the head. In Maharashtra, Sari worn differently not over petticoat but like male-dhoti with one end taken between the legs and tucked into the waist band behind.

Not all women wear *Saris* (and blouses). *Kameez* and *Salwars* of the Panjabi girl; the *Lehnga* and *choli* of the Rajasthani women and the *Kurta* and Pyjamas of women in U.P. or Kashmir—other varieties of female garments. Male garments include the *Salwar* (a kind of loose, gathered Pyjama) of the Panjabi and the Kashmiri; *Churidar* (something like the tight-fitting Jodhpur breeches); for the upper half of the body, shirts, kurtas, waist-coats, (may be of velvet, richly embroidered); for more ceremonial occasions the '*Sherwani*', a long buttoned-up coat. The '*Sherwani*' and the '*Ghuridar*' now the national dress (male).

Male Headgear, also widely different; several styles of turbans, North-western around a '*Kullah*'—a cap—, with highly starched tuft made out of one end; the Marwari turban, the Sikh turban, and so on. Caps include the Fez, the folding Angora-type, the Chrisity, the Parsi 'hat' and the Gandhi cap. But dress growing rapidly westernised, in the cities particularly. The western ward robe in toto part of modern sartorial trends.



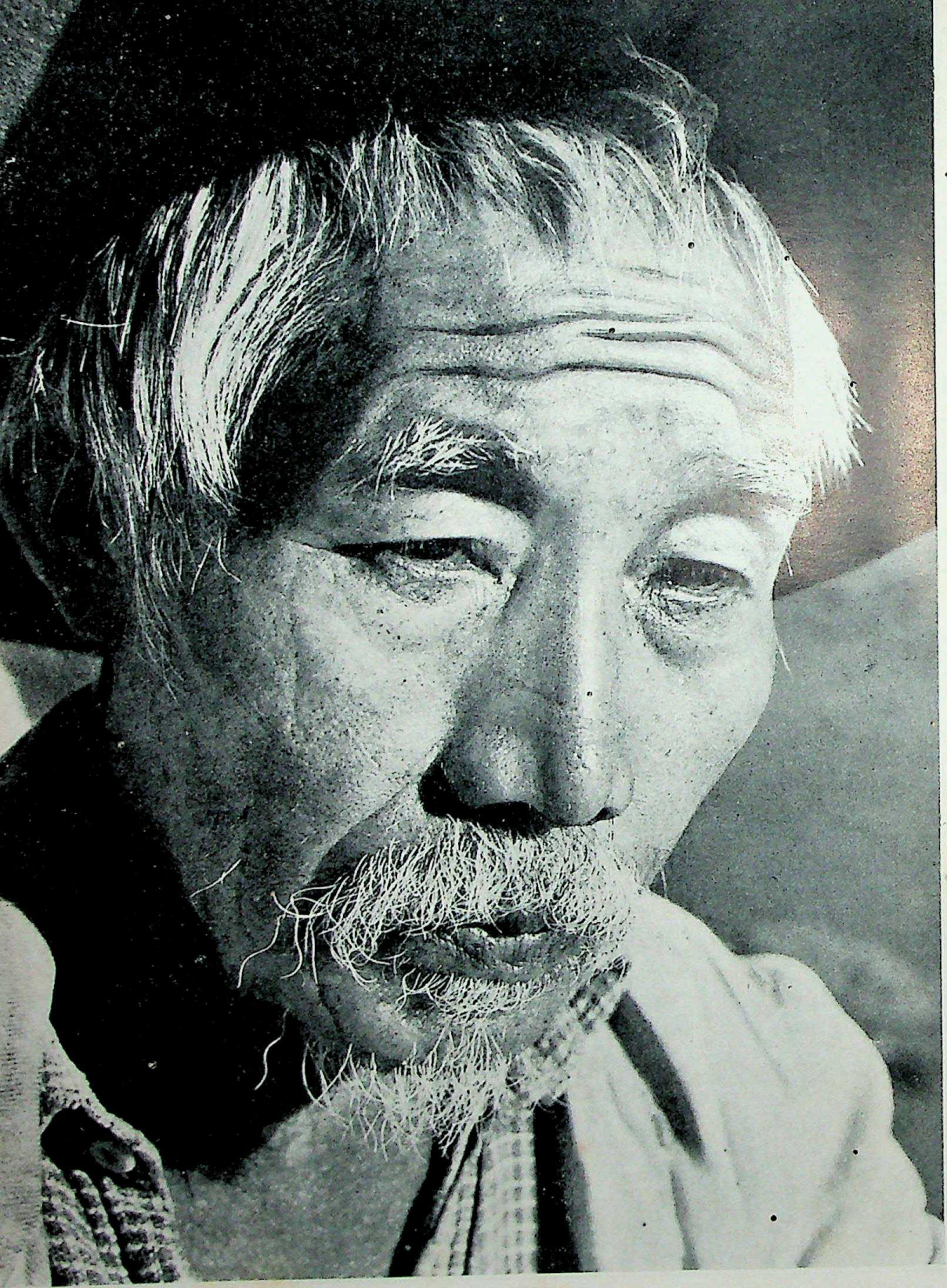
Rajasthani Dancer : Picturesque is the word for this dancer from Rajasthan. The gay colour of the clothes is explained by Rajasthan's acute shortage of water. « But her coquetry !



Lady from the Uplands : Bright costumes and profuse jewellery—gold for the rich, silver for the poor; these two features are common to all female attire in India.



Pipe of Peace : Typical Indian villager smoking his 'hookah'. He who has learnt to relish the old-fashioned 'chilam' will disdain the use of flimsy cigarettes and cancerous cigars.



Philosopher : The Indian villagers have a homely wisdom which comes from constant touch with Nature. Out of their rugged stock all that is best in India has been produced.



Waiting for Father: Far from neon signs and smart nylons, somewhere in a village in India, the lamp with the half-smoked 'chimney' helps to guide the wayfare home, the father to his child.



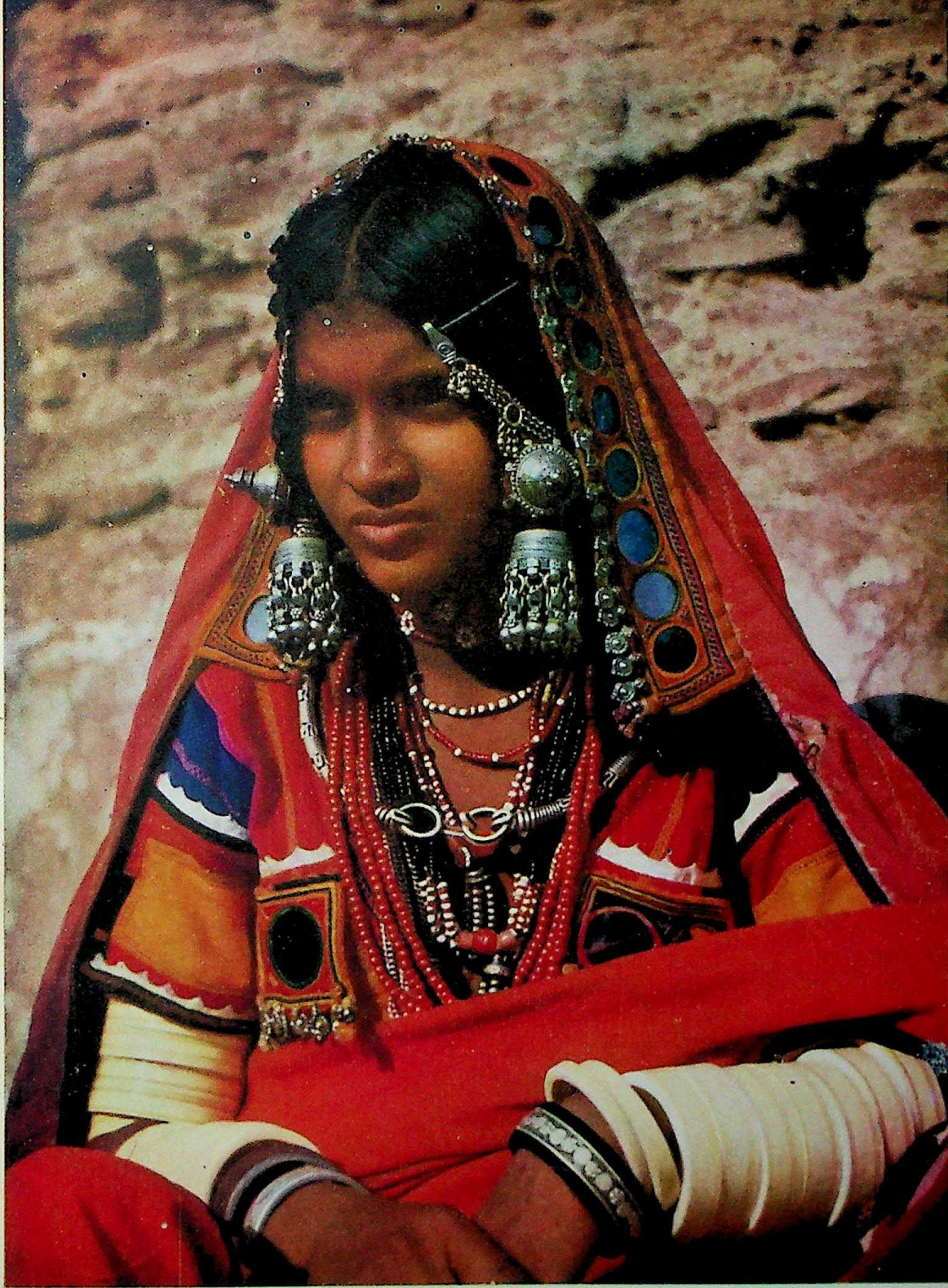
Grandpa ♦ For nothing except to fondle his grandson would a man lay aside his 'hookah'. Renewed in the Child's life, Old Age is happy that the continuity of the family-line is assured.



Washing Time: While the men plough and sow, there are chores galore for the women. Clothes must be washed and water brought; and a friend's company is welcome.



Back from the Village Well : "Women who walk like slow passing friezes, carrying on their heads loads of copper jars... as proudly as dancers", but, here, obviously in a hurry to get home.



Lambadi Girl : In India 'the warm sun bronzes the cheek of beauty'! No queen going for her coronation could have been more concerned about her dress and decoration than this maiden.



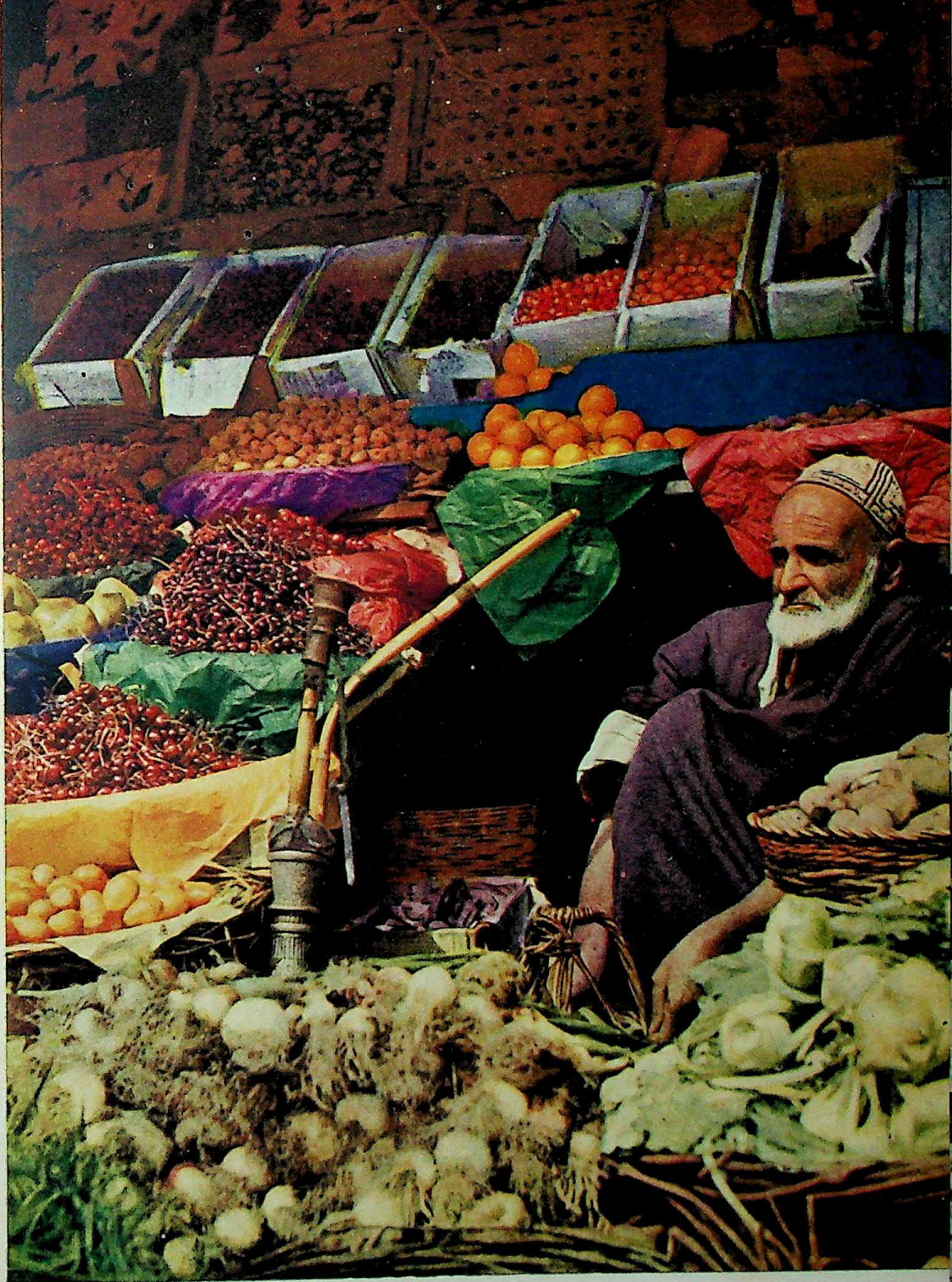
Garhwali Belles : Love of colourful costume and elaborate jewellery is ingrained in the Indian woman who is always *en toilette*. More so, among the tribal and montane folk.



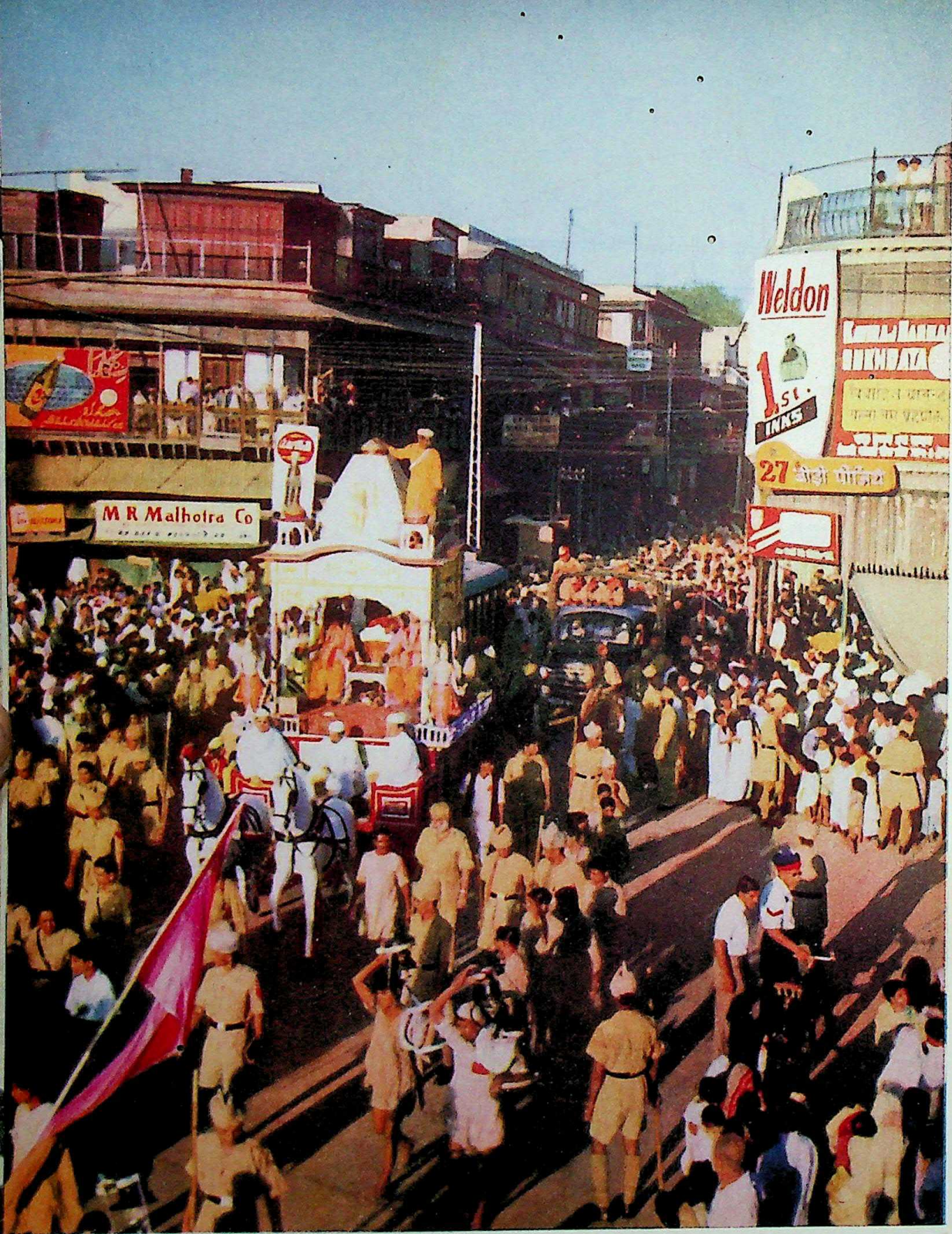
Camel-ride, Rajasthan : Ungainly in shape and in movement disjointed, 'the ship of the desert' stalks across the sands. A most useful mount for the height keeps the rider comparatively cool.



Over the Hurdles : One of the more popular of Delhi's fairs is the Annual Army Horse Show. Daring and skilful feats of horsemanship provide many thrills, both to the rider and the spectator.



Fruit-seller, Kashmir : Kashmir is a 'paradise' not only of beautiful flowers, but also of luscious fruit. Many who have visited Pahalgam will recognise an old friend in this aged vender.



Rath Yatra Delhi: The streets of Delhi witness countless processions. These include the Republic Day Pageant, 'Tazias', carrying of 'Granth Sahib' and 'Chariot-Drives' of deities.



Parade Watchers, Delhi : On January 26, every year, India celebrates the Republic Day. Huge crowds gather at India Gate to watch the Parade at which the President takes the salute.



White-Washing : Anywhere in India. For the festival of Diwali approacheth and the houses must be washed and cleaned and decorated to honour Lakshmi, the goddess of Wealth.

The Festivals

No country in the world has a calendar marked more red than ours. Indeed, it is dotted with such a number of fairs, feasts and festivals that he who can afford might attend one or the other all the year round and not exhaust the list ! From the New Year's Day on the 1st of January to the New Year's Eve on the 31st December, each date is an occasion—dedicated to some deity ; auspicious for one section or holy to another community ; heralding a season or ending a fast ; celebrating a great man's birthday or commemorating a national event : fair excuses all to shut up the world's workshop and to seek communion with Nature and God through joy and revelry ! An early bath ; gay clothes ; a visit to some sacred spot—a temple, a mosque, a church or a gurudwara ; devout prayers ; a brief ceremonial ; some slight offering to the dispenser of destinies...and lo ! the holy mood is over and the holiday begins, bringing, in its wake, mirth and much rejoicing, fun and good eating for all, and sweets and toys for children.

The explanation of all this exuberance lies in one or two salient features of the culture of the people, of their religion and philosophy. Since in India, "the source and reason of all things, the motive power of all action, the main-spring of life is religion", the festivals are no exception. This view, that the festivals of India have all a religious or 'a mythological background', is aptly summed up by M. M. Bhalla thus : "National festivals are the most vital mode of cultural activity, because they express the dynamic quality of community living...This is true of all communities the world over. But the most interesting thing about India is that her national festivals constitute an integral part of her way of life. And her way

of life is her religion, just as her way of religion is her way of life''. Looked at in that light, and considering that the Indians are a people so tolerant that they respect all religions, discard no faiths, and, further, that the Hindus alone have over thirty thousand gods and goddesses, the wonder is not that there are, in the country, so many festivals, but that there are so few of them !

As against the above, there is the opinion that the "(Hindu) festivals are largely seasonal. Thus the festival of Holi...signalises the beginning of the spring, while the Diwali festival marks the beginning of the Hindu commercial year". In a sense, this view is equally correct. The life of the Indians has always closely followed the changing moods of Nature, the rhythm of her seasons. Spring-time is pretty ring-time for all upon earth; and these tropical people welcome the end of winter and the advent of this joyous season of new life and of love. Though Holi and Diwali might or might not have been seasonal festivals, several others definitely are. The 'Vasant-Utsava' or 'Vasant Panchami', is named after the Spring itself ; 'Bhogali Bihu' in Assam, 'Onam' in Kerala, 'Pongal' in South, and 'Baisakhi' in the Panjab, are harvest festivals ; Lohri in the Panjab marks the culmination of winter while the colourful Teej festival of Rajasthan welcomes the rainy season ! All these and many more can be regarded, at least partly, as seasonal festivals. But the word 'seasonal' was and is, for the Indian, a part of his religious vocabulary. To the Indians, Nature has always been 'a mantle of Divinity, and therefore of sacred import and of spiritual significance'. She has always been associated intimately with their life and religion—which gets us back to the point that in India the 'way of life' and the 'way of religion' are not separate, mutually exclusive, entities.

Yet another line of approach—once again, not really opposed to either of the two mentioned already—is via the Indian philosophy of life or, more precisely, the Hindu view of life. The early Indians were an easy-going, happy lot. The necessities of life were abundantly provided by nature and there was no severe struggle for existence. The people could live, in the words of Max Muller, "like the birds

in a forest, and soar like birds towards the fresh air of heaven and the eternal sources of light and truth". The congenial environment and the easy conditions of life inclined the sages to the search for truth, others to the pursuit of mirth. And so while the sages meditated, the average householder sang and danced, thanked the gods, drank the 'soma', and made merry. And why not? For soon the sages who sought the truth came out with the philosophy of *joie de vivre*; of reaching unto God through 'bhog' and 'anand'—enjoyment; of belief in the immortality of the soul; of God being in His Heaven and everything right with the world. A splendid and most sensible philosophy because, as Lin Yutang remarks, "the only function of philosophy is to teach us to take life (more) lightly and gaily." Thousands of years afterwards, Martin Luther was to say that "our loving Lord God wills that we eat, drink and be merry"; Tolstoy to opine that "Man is meant for happiness"; and Spinoza to declare that "there cannot be too much merriment, but it is always good; but on the other hand melancholy is always bad". Without waiting for approval from these eminent minds of later times, and without bothering as to what the modern communist would think of the colossal waste of man-power and of working hours that these holidays would entail, the Indian went on celebrating festival after festival. And by now, this philosophy of mirth has got so engrained in the mental make-up of the people that even the ragged among the revellers might say with Sydney Smith, in all sincerity: "I thank God who has made me poor, that he has made me merry." This, incidentally, brings us to about the most valid argument in favour of festivals: that to the average Indian, condemned usually to a routine existence of drudgery and extreme poverty, to the villagers especially, festivals provide a welcome change from the dreary round of life. All work and no play make everybody dull, and not Jack alone. It is just as well that the Indians have always gone on adding to their festivals. Even when the old gods failed, the traditional courtesy and hospitality of the land refused to oust them, nay, kept on venerating them. And if the new gods have brought in new ceremonies and festivals, India has cheerfully adopted them, as if saying, "the more the merrier".

In some such fashion, then, has it come about that of the festivals of India, of the Hindus, in particular, there is literally no count. "Every district and every temple of any importance has its own particular festival taking place at some fixed period in the year". But the important dates, in the religious or the secular calendar, are not above a score. Of the Hindu festivals, the most important ones are Dussehra, Diwali, Krishna Janmashtami and Holi. *Dussehra* is associated with Rama, hero of the great epic Ramayana and seventh incarnation of Vishnu. Events from Rama's life are staged and enacted until the final day on which the effigies of the demon Ravana, king of Ceylon, and of his son and brother, are burnt publicly. This signifies the 'Vijay'—victory—of Good over Evil. In Bengal, this festival is celebrated differently, as Durga Puja—worship of Durga, the divine spouse of Siva—, and constitutes the most important festival of that state. *Diwali*—a corruption of the Sanskrit word 'Deepavali' meaning 'row-of-lights'—is a night to remember. It commemorates another auspicious episode from the life of Rama—his return, after fourteen years of exile, to his kingdom at Ayodhya. With this bright festival begins the Hindu commercial year and in all homes—cleaned, white-washed, lit and decorated for the occasion—Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, is worshipped. *Janmashtami* marks the birth anniversary of Krishna, the 8th incarnation of Vishnu and the most popular deity of the Hindus. The life-story of Krishna—the child, the youth, the king, or God revealing Himself before Arjuna in the battlefield of Kurukshetra—reads like the pages of a romance, and this day of dedication to his memory is celebrated with great devotion and rejoicing.

Of the Muslim festivals, mention may be made of Muharram, which is a period of mourning in remembrance of the death of Hussain, the Prophet's grandson; the three Ids—the Id-ul-Zuha held in honour of Abraham's offering of his son Ismael; the Id-ul-Fitr which celebrates the termination of Ramzan, the month of fasting; and Id-ul-Milad which commemorates the birth and death anniversaries of Mohammad; and the Shab-i-barat which is, for Muslims, a Night of Record on which the year's deeds are recorded in Heaven.

Then there are the Christian festivals of Good Friday, Easter and the great Christmas Day. The last is celebrated by the people almost like a national festival. The most important Sikh festivals are the two Guruparabs—the birth anniversaries of the Guru Nanak and Govind Singh. Buddha's birthday and, likewise, Gandhi's, are national holidays and festivals. Of the Parsee community, the main dates are Jamshed Nauroz celebrated by the Fasli section as the day on which King Jamshed of Persia embraced Zoroastrianism; and Khordad Sal which is the birth anniversary of the prophet Zoroaster. Mahavir Jayanti is, for the Jain community, a day dedicated to the memory of Vardhamana Mahavir, the Founder of this faith, who was born on this day more than 2,500 years ago.

In addition to these traditional, All-India festivals, there are a few recent dates of national importance like the Independence Day and the Republic Day which are celebrated with great enthusiasm. Then, there is a host of regional festivals which have always been interesting, attractive and popular folk-celebrations. And finally, there is the type of festivals—now a common feature—which include such items as the Drama-Festivals in cities like Delhi, the Folk-Dances Festival on the Republic Day, Youth Festivals organized by the Ministry of Education and many more of the same sort.

If a festival is, as the dictionary defines it, pre-eminently 'a joyful celebration', there is nothing, anywhere in the world, to beat the Holi Festival—the carnival of colours. There are other joyous festivals, and some perhaps more important than this one; but, Holi remains the festival of festivals all over the country. Various explanations are given as a seasonal celebration associated with the Spring or with the wheat harvest of Western India; or as a religious commemoration of the youthful Krishna's love-play with the *Gopis* or of the death at his hands of the giantess Putana; or, again, of the burning away of Holika in the story of prince Prahlad—it is essentially a revel more akin to a *bachhanal*, or Saturnalia intended to serve, perhaps, as a psychological outlet. As one art-critic interprets it: "The Holi is a true expression of the emotions of the Hindu East at spring time, when the warm sun which bronzes the

cheek of beauty also subtly penetrates each living fibre of the yielding frame, awakening by its mellowing touch, soft desires and wayward passions which brook no restraint, which dread no danger and over which the metaphysical Hindu readily throws the mantle of his most comprehensive and accommodating creed". But whatever the why and wherefore of it, it is the country's most popular festival ; and almost every body, Hindu or the non-Hindu, native or foreigner, all except the finicky and the morbid—the wet-blankets of the species—like to join in the great fun. The entire nation gets into a holiday mood ; the splash of colour in nature is matched by the sprinkling of colour by men. Healthy mischief, boyish pranks, fun and frivolity are rampant, and there is merriment galore. Every one, from the President down to the poorest peasant, puts respectability aside for a day, and abandons himself to the celebration of this gayest of festivals and India's most popular sport and pastime !

A word about some of the regional festivals which include many very colourful and a few very curious items. The charming Raksha Bandhan when sisters tie a 'rakhi'—a thread imploring protection for the sister—on the wrists of their brothers, is a North-Indian festival. The 'Sair-i-gulfaroshan'—festival of flowers—held at Mehrauli, near Delhi, is more of a fair but is noteworthy for its joint participation of the Hindus and the Muslims. Then there are the well-known 'Onam' and the 'Pongal' of the south ; the Ras Lila of the graceful dancers of Manipur ; the gay and lively 'Teej', mentioned already, of the belles of Rajasthan singing and swinging under the monsoon clouds ; the unusual celebration of Holi, with sticks and shields, by the men and women of Barsana and Nandgaon, near Mathura, the home-villages of Radha and Krishna, the divine lovers ; and several fire-walking festivals. Finally, there is the most extraordinary Kashmiri festival of 'Khichmavas' when the stray dogs of Kashmir have their day and are treated royally. On this day, so the Kashmiris believe, a *Yaksha* spirit, invisible but for a white cap on its head, runs through the streets and he who can catch the cap commands the spirit—the elusive spirit, the spirit of the festival, perhaps ; man's for a moment ere it is gone, alas ! too soon ; leaving him to face the not-so-mirthful realities of day-to-day existence !

General Information

Festival defined as "joyful or honorific celebration: a feast; a season of performances of music, plays, or the like." India's festivals represent all types. Mainly religious—'honorific'; some secular, whether seasonal or connected with events of national importance. Given number recognised as All-India. Dates and brief descriptions of such given below; Important to note that Hindu festivals follow the Hindu (solar) year; Muslim festivals the lunar calendar; hence dates in former and (even) seasons in latter case vary greatly over the year(s); for example, the fast of Ramzan and hence Id-ul-Fitr may occur in summer or in winter. Dates of 'modern' celebrations like Republic Day, Independence Day etc., firm as these follow the official calendar.

January 1—New Year's Day: Official All-India holiday celebrated by the 'westernised' section in typical 'western' style. No popular appeal. Just one holiday: The year "well begun"!

January 26—Republic Day: Formerly celebrated as Independence Day for in 1929, Indian National Congress pledged to strive for Independence. In 1950, on this date India declared a 'Sovereign Democratic Republic'. Nation-wide celebrations, but best at New Delhi, impressive military parade and spectacular pageant of tableaux from various States. Festival of colourful folk dances organised.

February/March (Phalguna)—Vasant Panchmi: Spring festival of North India. Girls wear *Saris* or *Dupattas* dyed yellow to match the jolly-looking mustard fields in full bloom. Plenty of kite-flying by boys even grown-ups. In Bengal, Sarasvati the Goddess of Arts and of Sciences worshipped on this day.

February/March (Phalguna)—Shivratri: Literally Night of Shiva; on which devotees worship in belief that salvation possible. For the Arya Samajis, a reformist sect of the Hindus, important date as 'Founder', Swami Dayanand's mind turned away from idol worship when on that night he saw a mouse roaming over the God's statue.

February/March (Phalguna)—Holi: Many legends. Krishna killed a giantess Putna who begged for commemoration of Day. But popular associations with death as pyre of Holika, (supposed to be immune to fire) demon

aunt of Prince Prahlad (Bhakta) who would not acknowledge his father Hiranya Kashyap as God and escaped unhurt in fire while Holika was burnt away. *Bonfires* symbolising the destruction of Holika (evil) lit on the preceding evening.

March 21—Jamshed Nauroz: Parsi festival of the Fasli section, dating from King Jamshed's time.

March/April—Mahavir Jayanti: Birth anniversary of Vardhamana Mahavira, Founder of Jainism.

March/April—Good Friday: British rule intensified propagation of Christianity and brought about observance of Christian festivals. Three days connected with Jesus Christ observed as public holiday; 'Good Friday' marks the martyrdom of Jesus Christ.

Easter Day: Commemorates the resurrection.

April/May (Vaisakha)—Vaisakhi or Baisakhi: marks the beginning of the Hindu year. Popular Panjabi harvest festival celebrated as a gay fair with folk-dancing etc.

April/May—Shab-i-Barat: "As befits a reforming creed, the festivals of Islam are of a more seriously-minded character than those of the fanciful and mythical Hindu...The Shab-i-Barat or Night of Record, is a festival peculiar to India. It is celebrated with fireworks, a symbol which is difficult to understand, as the occasion is like the other Moslem celebrations a very solemn one, as on this day men's deeds and actions are measured and rewards and punishments allotted accordingly."—*Col. Blackharn*.

April/May (Vaisakha)—Buddha Jayanti: Gautama the Buddha, perhaps India's greatest son, born this day in 563 B.C. at Lumbini in Nepal.

Id-ul-Fitr: Marks the end of Ramzan, the solemn month of fasts. The new moon announces the Id on the day following when Muslims dressed in their best and gayest congregate in public worship, and exchange greetings in an atmosphere of general rejoicing. "There are many fewer festivals for the Mohammadan than for the Hindu and they are mostly of rather a funeral character. Id-ul-Fitr, the day which breaks the fast of

Ramzan comes nearest to our idea of a festival." —*Flora A Steel*.

Id-ul-Zuha : Commemorates the great test of Abraham who being commanded to sacrifice his son, Ismael, blind-folded himself carried out the divine wish. However, on removing the cloth, found that a ram had been substituted for his son who stood safely by his side. Rams and goats sacrificed; much feasting and rejoicing.

August 15—Independence Day : Anniversary of attainment of Independence. Nation-wide celebrations through flag-hoisting, public gatherings. Day's highlight flag hoisting by Prime Minister on ramparts of Delhi's Red Fort.

July/August (Srivana)—Nag Panchami : Literally fifthday in honour of the Snake (Shesha or Anant 'Infinite')—on whom Vishnu the Preserver reclines during off-time between Shiva's destruction of one universe and 'Brahma's creation of another—Cloth effigies or stone-images of snakes worshipped on this day.

July/August (Srivana)—Raksha-Bandhan : (the tie of knot of protection) variously interpreted as sister's or wife's blessing for man's protection or sister's token as right of protection by "Raksha-bandh" brother; either way, a most charming gesture of affection and faith.

August/September (Bhadrapad) — Ganesh Chaturthi : Day of dedication to Ganesh, Ganapati, the elephant headed God of wisdom; a most auspicious 'God' without whose blessing no work may be started. Images of Ganesh immersed in rivers and festival celebrated in a joyous mood and picturesque manners.

August/September—Pateti—New year's day for the Kadami community of the Parsis. Associated with 'repentance' and marked like all Parsi festivals by prayers, alms-giving, visits to friends.

August/September (Bhadrapad)—Janmashtami : Birth anniversary of Krishna, the 8th incarnation of Vishnu. The devout keep fast which broken at mid-night—the time when the 'God' was born. Elaborate and jubilant celebrations at Mathura associated with Krishna.

Muharram : A ten-day period of mourning for Shia Muslims who uphold that the rightful successor was Prophet's grandson. Believing that the Arabs would side with him he advanced against nominated Yazid. Imam Hussain was killed at Karbala; Beautiful paper and bamboo 'tazias'—replicas of the martyr's tomb—carried out in procession of frenzied fol-

lower bewailing and beating themselves in a heart-rending manner.

September/October (Ashvini)—Dussehra : A most popular festival organised on grand scale in bigger cities. After a nine day (Navratre) continuous enacting of Ram Lila (episodes from Ram's life) on final day huge effigies of demon King Ravana and his son and brother publicly burnt; symbolises triumph of evil over good. Picturesquely celebrated in Mysore and Kulu. (In Bengal, festival celebrated as Durga Puja.)

October 2—Gandhi Jayanti : Gandhi, the 'Father of the Nation' born on October 2, 1869.

October/November (Kartika)—Guruparab : Birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, Founder of Sikhism, revered by the Hindus with equal devotion. All sikh festivals celebrated in like manner. 'Akhand Path'—uninterrupted reading of the scriptures—precedes the day of the festival on which the 'Granth Sahib'—the sacred book—is taken out in an impressive procession. 'Langars' and 'piaos' set up and food and drink distributed freely.

October/November (Kartika)—Diwali or Deepavali : Festival of lights, India's loveliest festival when all homes lit with 'divas'—little earthen pots—to mark the return of, and to 'welcome' Rama after his 14 years exile. Elaborate lightening in all cities. In the capital, Rashtrapati Bhavan an artistic and attractive sight. Marks the commencement of the Hindu commercial year. Lakshmi the Goddess of wealth worshipped in all Hindu homes. Though inexplicable, customary to indulge in a bit of gambling on the occasion.

Id-i-Milad (Bara Wafat) : The 12th day of the Muslim month Rabi-ul-Awwal sacred as birth and death anniversary of Prophet. (570 to 632 A.D.)

December 25—Christmas Day : Birth anniversary of Jesus Christ, celebrated by Christians and non-Christians throughout India as a festive occasion. Christmas services, carol and trees, exchange of greetings and gifts and cards; fetes and balls and all that goes with merry X'mas any where in the world.

December 31—New Year's Eve : Though no holiday, Eve celebrated by westernised section in typical international manner.

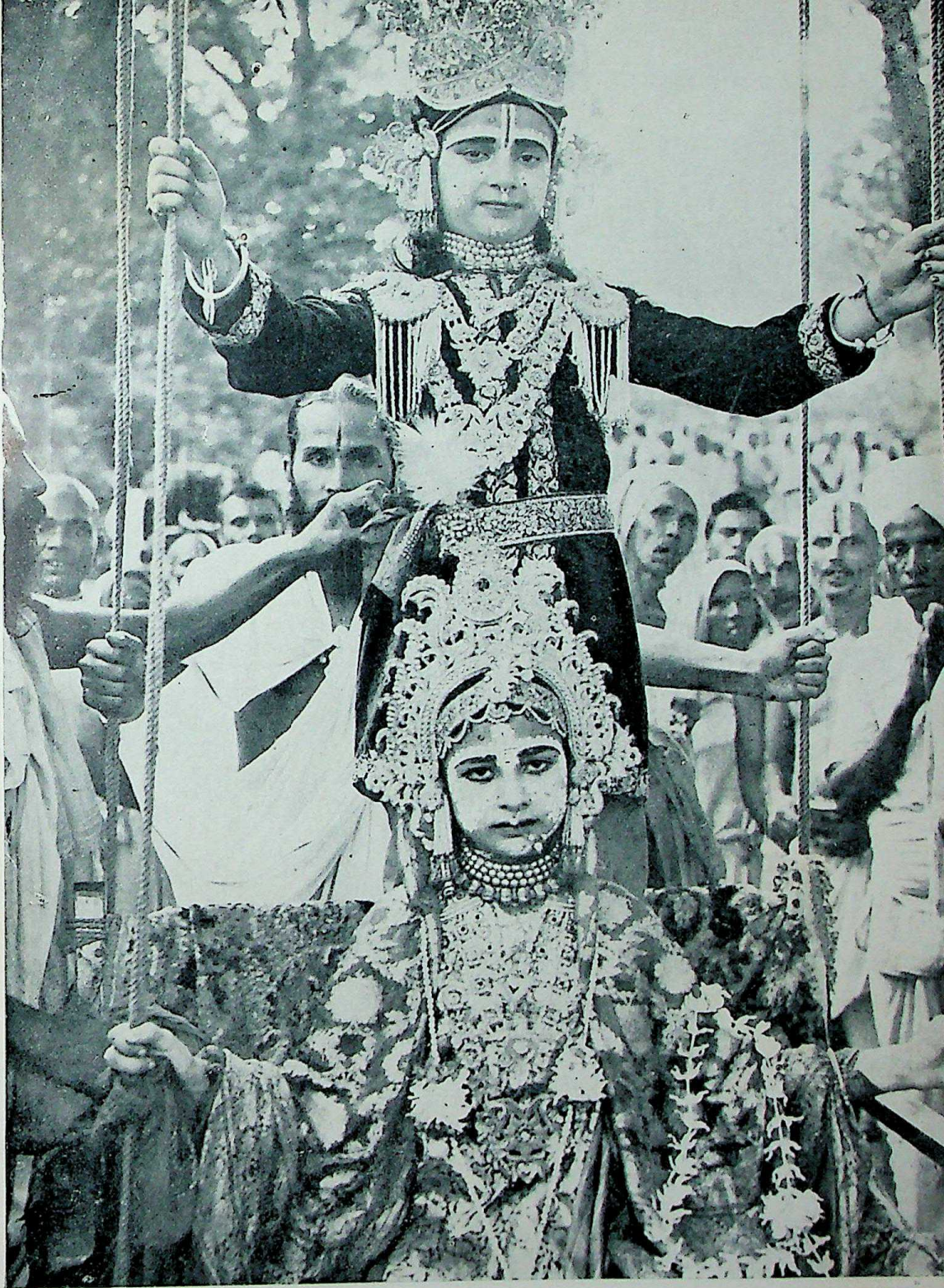
December/January—Guruparab : Birth anniversary of 10th and last Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) who formed the Sikhs into a martial community, celebrated in the usual manner of the Sikh festivals.



Dussehra at Kulu: The people of Kulu celebrate Dussehra with a pomp and pageantry all their own, and gods are brought from all over the valley to assemble in one glorious fair.



Music-makers from Rajasthan : Rajasthan is a land of colour and romance, of music and dance. From simple instruments are produced rhythm and melody of great verve and charm.



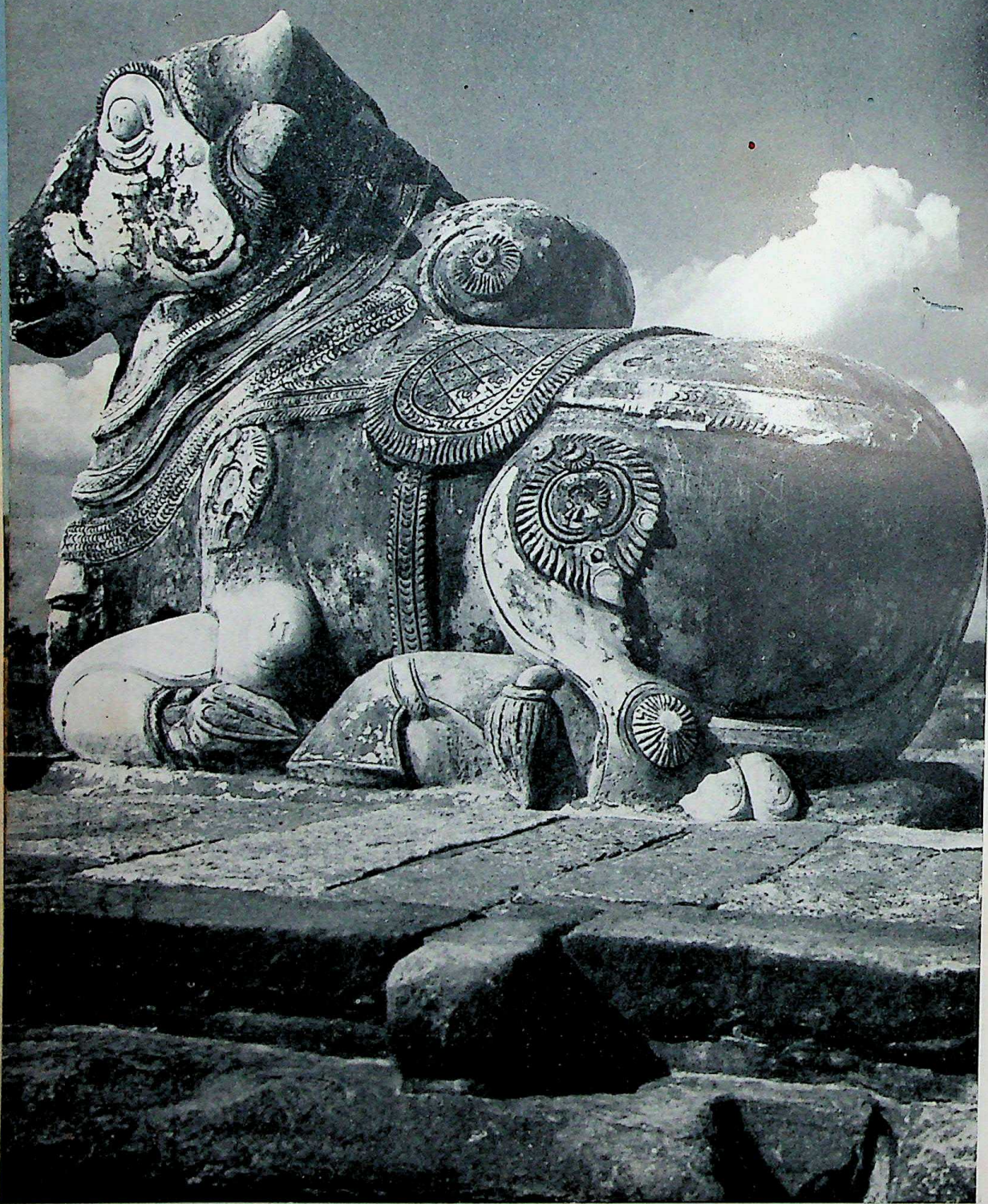
• Rama and Sita, Ayodhya : Ram Lila is popular entertainment every where. But at Ayodhya Rama's home and 'kingdom', the celebrations are marked with special animation and devotion.



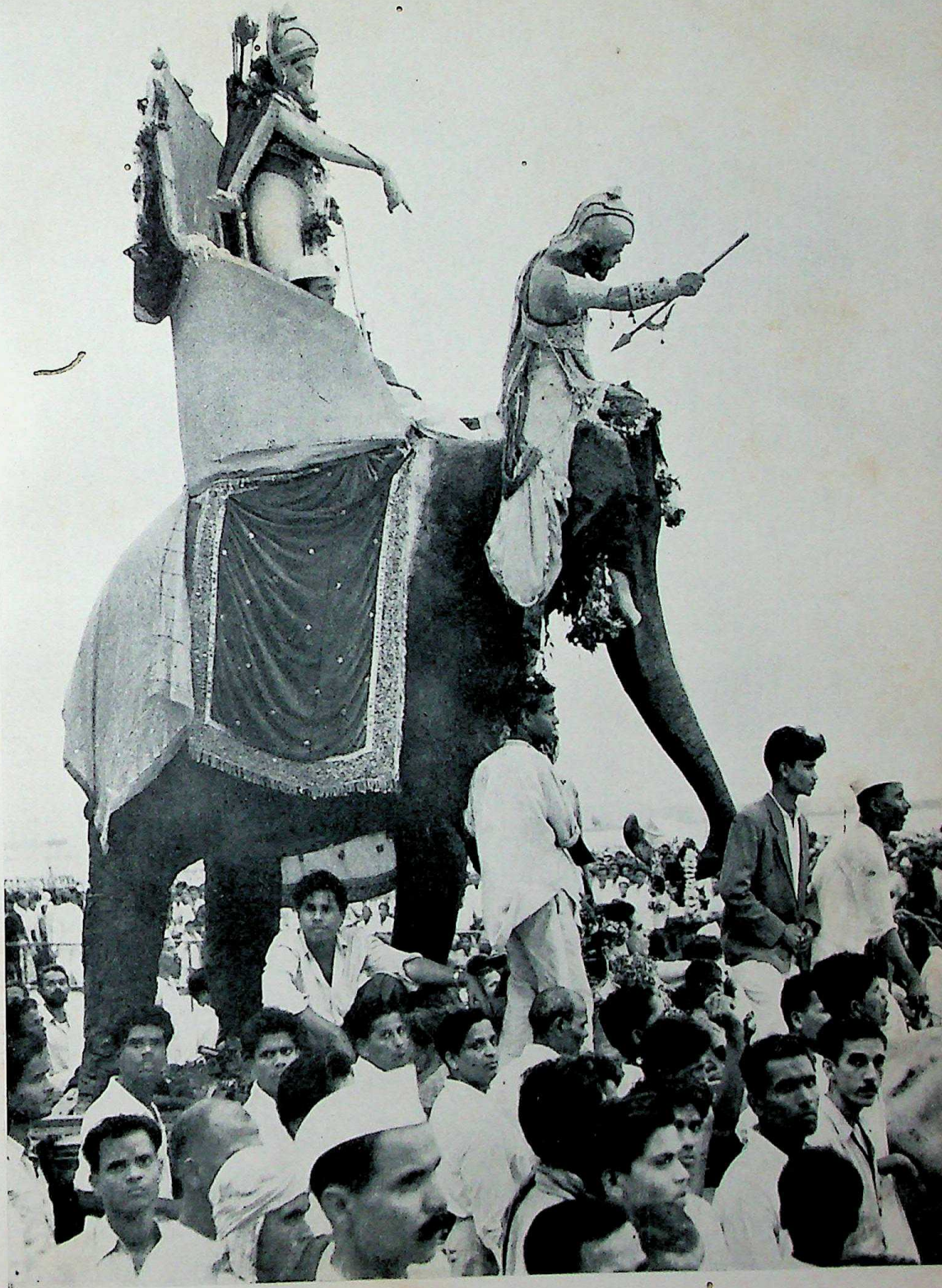
Baisakhi : On this day starts the Hindu (New) Year; and an early-morning dip in the river is considered most auspicious. On the banks a regular fair is held.



Buddha, the Prince of Peace : Give to this warring world—"Thou Blessed One
The treasure of the Kingdom of thy word".



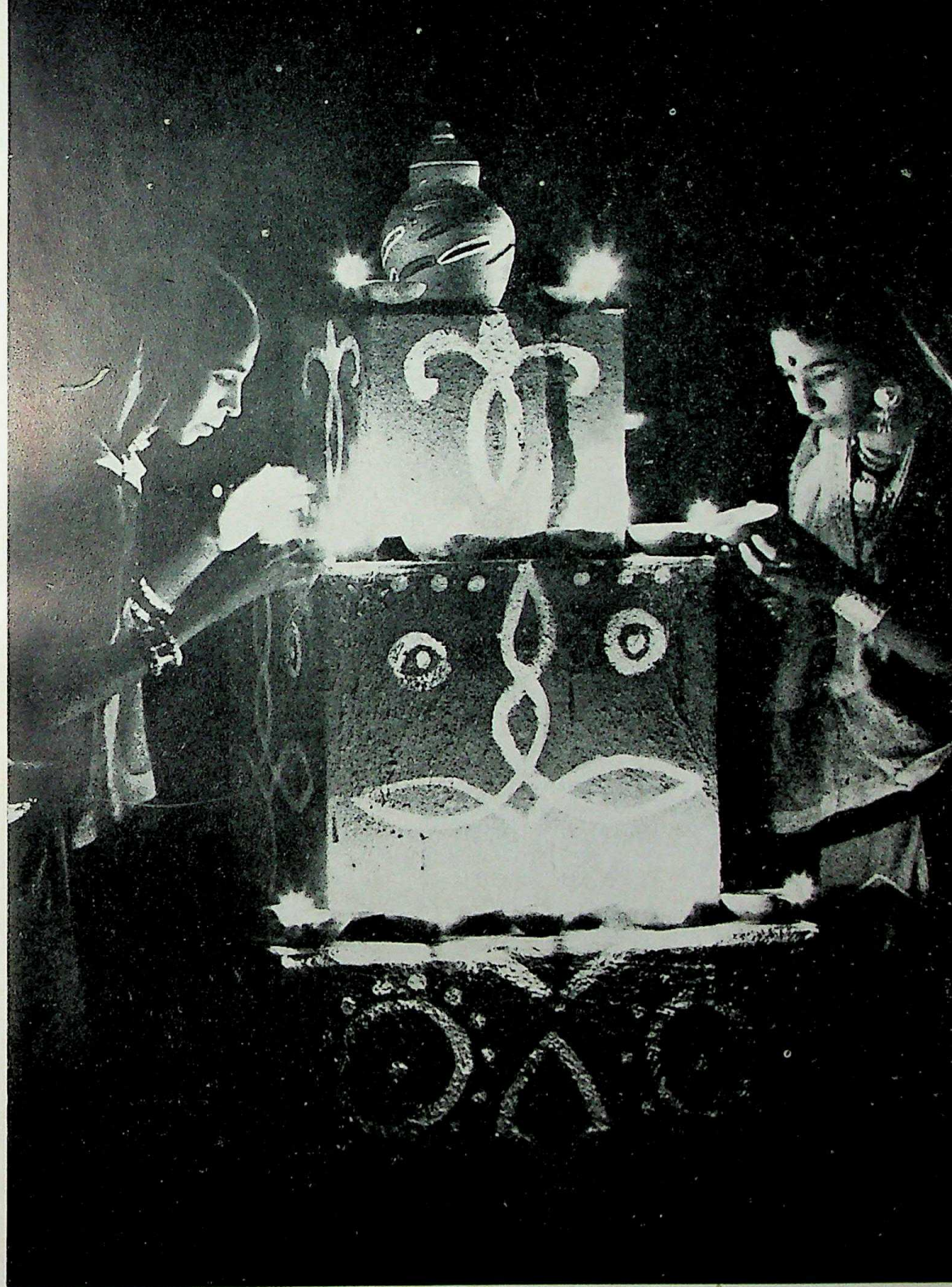
Nandi : All Hindu gods have their mounts—'vahans': Nandi the bull is associated with Shiva and a statue of the animal is invariably found where the deity is worshipped.



- Ganpati Festival, Maharashtra :: Ganesh, the elephant-headed son of the god Shiva, is for the Hindus a deity so auspicious that nothing auspicious may begin without his blessings.



Before the Fall : On the final day of Dussehra celebrations, huge effigies of Ravana, the bad king of Lanka, and his son (and brother) are burnt publicly. This marks the victory of good over evil.



° **Patterns of Light:** Diwali is the festival of joy and light. All homes are decorated and lit, and Lakshmi is worshipped. The little oil lamps called 'divas' add great cheer and brightness.



Rathayatra, Puri: The annual 'rathayatra' of Jagannatha—the Lord of the Universe—at Puri, Orissa, is a tremendous affair. The colossal car carrying the deity is pulled by the devotees.



Dussehra at Mysore : Of all celebrations of this great festival, those at Mysore are by far the most resplendent. Their highlight is the procession of beautifully bedecked and painted elephants.



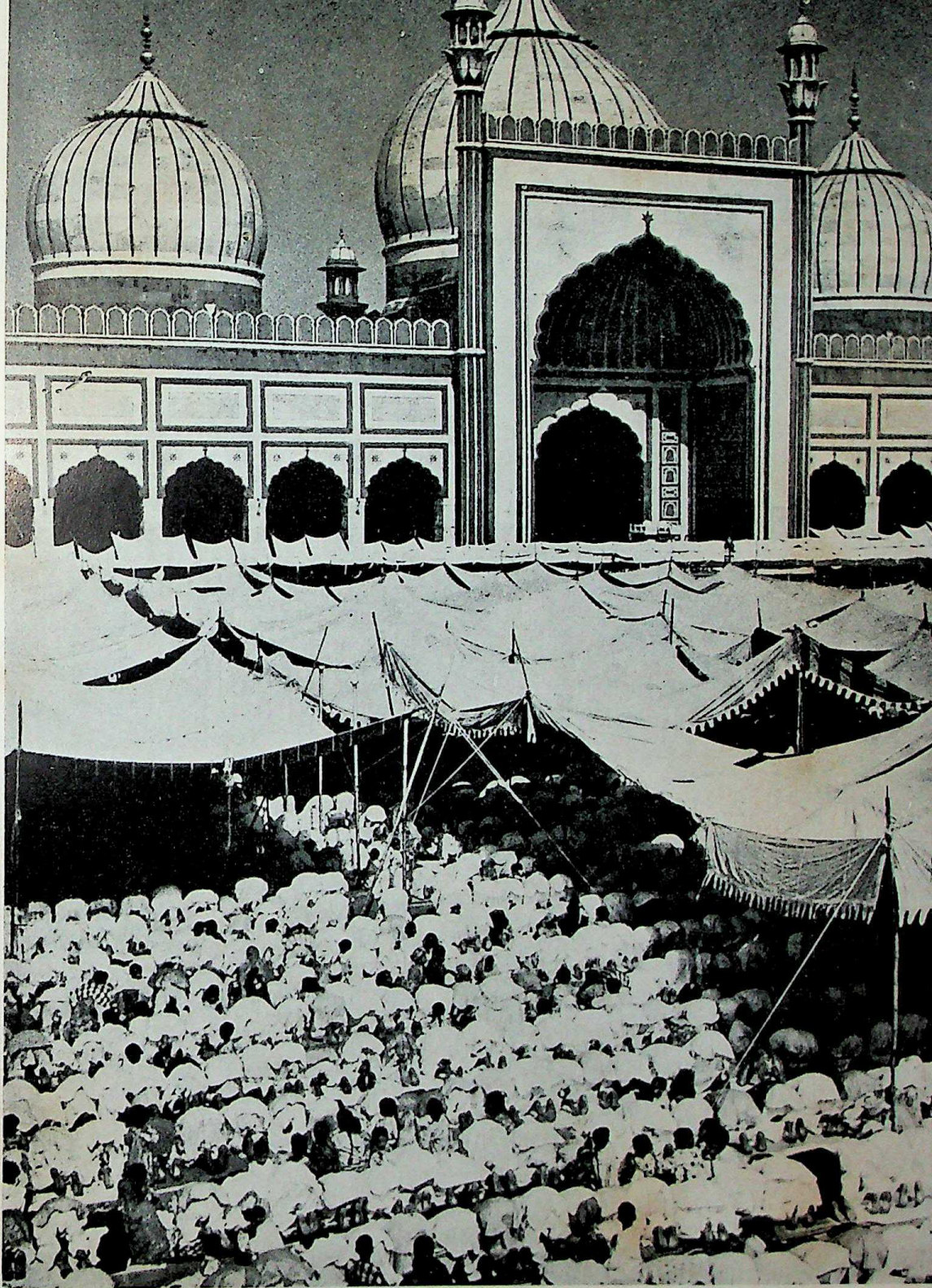
Durga Puja, West Bengal : Vijaya Dashmi-Dussehra for the north and south-is Durga Puja in Bengal. On this most important festival of the Bengalis, Durga, wife of Shiva, is worshipped.



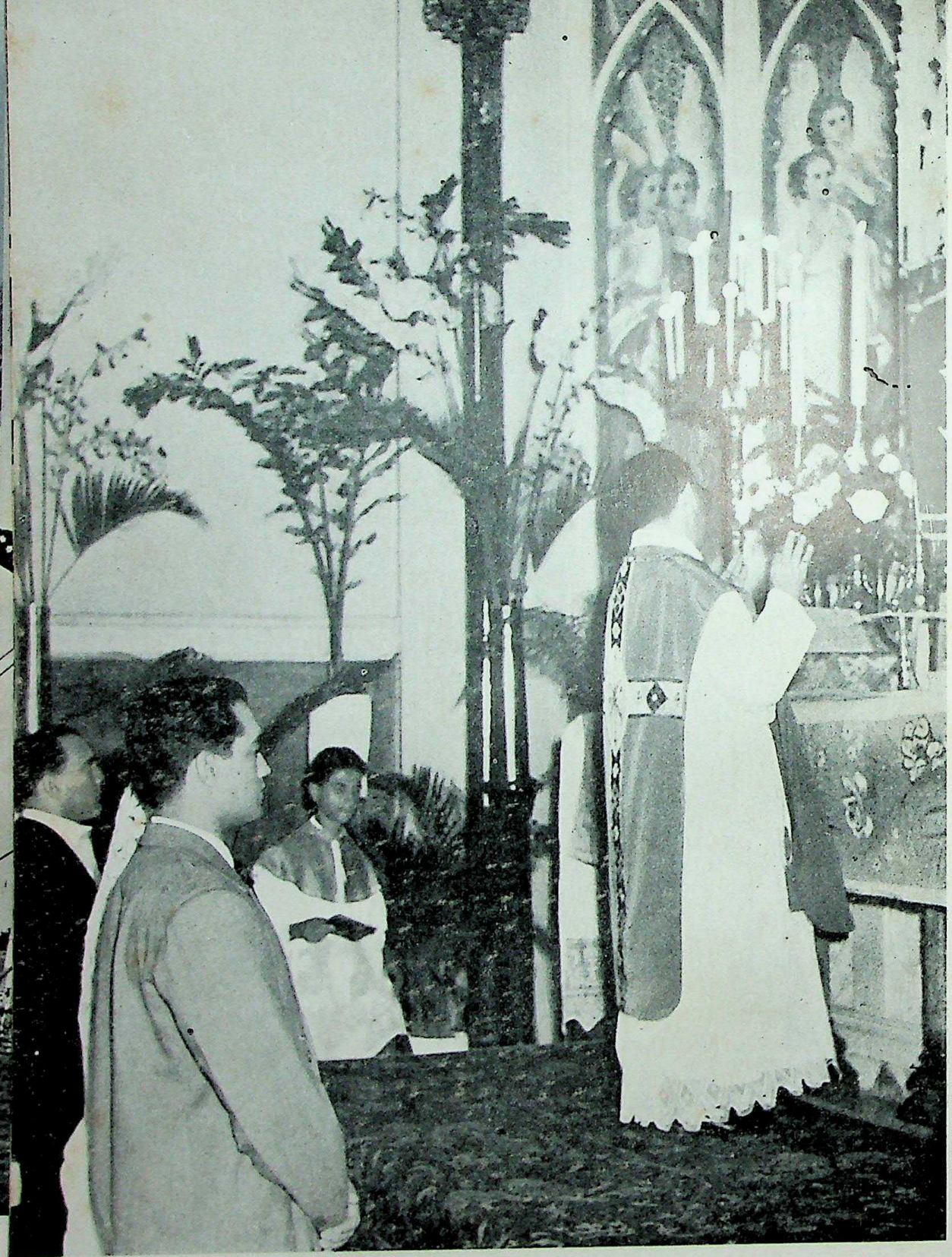
Gurpurab: The Sikhs celebrate the Birth Anniversaries of their Gurus by carrying their scriptures, the Granth Sahib, in a procession headed by devotees holding unsheathed swords.



Jain Jal Yatra : Processions are a feature common to the celebration of most festivals in India. Here a procession of the Jains is in progress.



Id in Delhi: Prayer before Pleasure. All festivals of the Muslims observe this rule and in different mosques of the town large congregations mark the first phase of the Id celebrations.



Christmas Day: The sober 'side of the festival,' the service and mass, is, of course, for the Christians, but-all will join in the merry celebrations that are associated with Christ's birthday.

Arts and Crafts

Of the arts and crafts of India, people talk with 'bated breath.' The first impression is that there is universal appreciation of the nation's great achievements in this field. In architecture, the country possesses not only the Taj which alone, it is often said, is justification enough for coming to India, but there are also other wonders. In sculpture, India's temples provide a wealth and variety which are as ravishing as they are inexhaustible. Of art proper—the art of painting—the frescoes of Ajanta, to mention nothing else, rank among the world's best. Her drama includes the incomparable Shakuntala which sent Goethe in raptures. Music and Dancing constitute, for the Indians, the arts divine—they were handed down by the gods themselves. As to her crafts, all history — ancient, medieval and modern—is witness to the excellence and beauty of things made in this country. Indian muslins, brocades, ivories, metal work, shawls, carpets, jewels and jewellery have always been eagerly sought. Even the British had come hither, in the first instance, for trade in her manufactures. Surely, then, there cannot be two opinions so far as India's arts and crafts are concerned. Thus, perhaps all that one need do in this section is to list and describe the various items, and to direct him, who would care to understand and appreciate, to her monuments and studios, galleries and concert-halls, museums and emporia.

So it would seem. But, unfortunately, over the past few hundred years a myth was created that Indian arts were negligible or archaic. Even one ignores Babar's hasty judgment that the people of Hindustan had "no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their *handicrafts*, no skill or knowledge in

design or *architecture*", how can one account for the complete absence of any mention of India in most western works on world art. 'Histories' and 'Outlines' of Art which trace, in their able introductions and scholarly dissertations, exhaustive, stage-by-stage development of man's aesthetic creations, omit references to this country as if her people never had anything to do with such matters. In fact, the darkness that descended when Aurangzeb banished the arts from his kingdom was intensified by the aesthetics and even the prejudices of the westerners. Naturally they thought no end of their culture and art and stubbornly refused to see any good in what was Indian. Macaulay thought that all Indian art was worthless. Ruskin's Lamps had western wicks and their limited light lit only the European scene. To many of the Occident, Indian art meant "no more than a pretty chintz, a rich brocade, or gorgeous carpet, fantastic carving, or curious inlay; and an ancient architecture fascinating to the archaeologist and tourist with its reminiscences of bygone pomp and splendour but (now) an extinct art". So deep-rooted was this antipathy, that even today one finds, in these matters, a great deal of ignorance, if not cussedness.

So, even in this field of arts and crafts, there is the familiar dissimilarity of verdict and opinion, as far removed as Alpha and Omega. And, once again, most of the judgments pronounced are but points of view—none of which is right wholly. Truth appears to lie, as ever, in neither camp, but somewhere betwixt and between, in no man's land. In fact, here, more than any where else, it is more elusive, for we are no longer in a matter-of-fact, practical world where statistics and data can be checked and counter-checked. Instead, we are in the realm of beauty—or whatever is the beginning and end of art—, in an abstract world which has form and meaning, and only *such* form and meaning, as the creator gives and the subject brings to it.

That is why it is necessary to approach this strange and weird world of Indian art in a spirit, not uncritical, but certainly impartial. For the westerner, especially, what Havell said fifty years ago is still

sound advice. "No European can appreciate Indian art who does not divest himself of his western prepossessions, endeavour to understand Indian thought, and place himself at the Indian point of view". This, not only because, "No artistic formula can be justified or condemned in itself, it must be judged by reference to the quality of the works that exemplify it", etc; but—and chiefly—because the roots and ideals of Indian art, its theory and practice, are altogether different. It is important therefore to make sure that one is looking at things from the right end of the telescope.

Of course, the point to underscore is that of the role of religion. "India is a land and a people intoxicated with God". In that remark of Lin Yutang lies the clue to the understanding of most things Indian, and of her arts. Just as in other matters 'her way of life is her way of religion' and vice-versa, so with her arts. These, as this country practised them, were 'religious'—roots, stalk and flower. Art was Religion, and Yoga, and Dedication, so that to be an artist, whether imager or craftsman, musician or dancer, was no joke. The Shilpa Shastras enjoined that "The Shilpan (artificer) should understand the Atharva Veda, the thirty-two Shilpa Shastras, and the Vedic mantras by which the deities are invoked. He should be one who wears a sacred thread, a necklace of holy beads, and a ring of kusa grass on his finger; delighting in the worship of God, faithful to his wife; avoiding strange women, piously acquiring a knowledge of various sciences". Or, "the painter must be a good man, no sluggard, not given to anger; holy, learned, self-controlled, devout and charitable, such should be his character". Or; "Let the imager establish images in temples by meditation on the deities who are the objects of his devotion". Similarly, in Dance and Drama, Shiva is the Lord of Dancers and King of Actors. The 'Natya-Shastra'—the learned treatise of Bharata, dealing with these arts—is spoken of as the 'Fifth Veda'. And although Indian Music is intimately associated with the rhythm and lilt of nature and seasons, its beginnings are traced to legends of gods and goddesses who were its authors and patrons. The goddess Saraswati is the goddess of art and learning and seated on a white lotus, she plays eternally upon a vina. And

it was a Rishi—Narada, who wanders about on earth and heaven like one enjoying a dual citizenship—who first taught music to men. In fact the arts came into being and existed in order that men might do honour to the gods. The architect was to build *their* houses—a temple being the house of God—; the sculptor was to carve *their* images ; the painter was to portray *their* legends ; the dancer and the actor were required to entertain *them* ; the musician to sing *their* praises. Thus, from the very start, there was, in India, perfect adjustment between “ethics and aesthetics”, and Religion and Art were “names for one and the same experience”. Art was but one more means of achieving the goal of goals, ‘Moksha’—Release. The artist set out to seek not beauty but truth, and, if in his search for the ‘Brahma’ that lay beyond ‘Maya’, behind His creation, it created what was but the illusion of an illusion, that, too, was to help the people who could not comprehend truth in the abstract. So that, in the final analysis, the illusion of Art, was used but to remove the greater illusion which is the world around us... But let us cry halt to these high-sounding theories and generalizations about Art, and turn to the arts themselves.

Primarily, the visitor to India is interested in architecture, in the world-renowned monuments of India. Built at different times and belonging to different styles, they constitute a priceless heritage of which the nation is justly proud. Yet, all these buildings belong to India’s past, whether of glory or regrets. As to the ‘Progressive Present’, the buildings that came up during the British rule are “reminiscent for the most part of Kindergarten toys and a cheap Glasgow emporium. Calcutta’s Victoria Memorial and New Delhi, with its mighty “Secretariat-cum-Viceregal Palace”, are the triumphs *par excellence* of the British period—a poor record, of which even the English champions of the Empire have been contemptuous and critical. To quote Rawlinson from his ‘British Achievement in India,’ “In one respect, indeed, we have grievously failed. Nothing has been done to encourage Indian architecture—we shall leave behind us no monuments in stone comparable to those which perpetuate the memory of the Mughal dynasty”. Or, to quote Beverly Nichols on the great city of

New Delhi: "Sir Edwin Lutyens who was largely responsible for it, had obviously made the most strenuous efforts to please every body.....but he ended by pleasing no body. The result was a sort of architectural *Esperanto*, and *Esperanto* is not a language in which men make love, or soldiers sing to battle, or builders dream great dreams". And Chandigarh apart, '*Esperanto*' continues to dominate the Indian architecture of to-day.

And so the tourist and the native must make do with the old, several specimens of which are included among the world's best. To see these, to gaze across the centuries at the men who built them, is an unforgettable experience. For these are places in which "one can forget the present where—if one can only get rid of fellow passengers, guides and such like—one can realize what past India must have been".

Of Indian sculpture which has always been an integral part of its architecture, it can be said that once the mind accepts and gets used to the motifs and conventions of this art, it is sheer delight to look at the literally inexhaustible wealth displayed in Indian temples. Ranging between the lotus and the Himalayas, there is such an incredible variety of image and symbol, carved with such profusion and elaborateness, that, for imagination, the sculptures of India "must surely take the first place in the world". Whether it is that world-masterpiece, the Kailash temple at Ellora, or the marvellous Rathas at Mahabalipuram; those "moments of perfect utterance" like the Orissan temples at Konarak and Bhuvaneshwar, or the 'carving-incarnate' shrines of Khajuraho and Mount Abu—they all show a supreme elegance of design and perfection of execution. The same is true of the great Bronzes of the Cholas, some of which are treasured in the museums of the world. Of these the most celebrated piece is that of the Cosmic Dancer, 'Nataraj', which for its poise and grace has earned the admiration of many including Rodin.

Talking of sculpture, it is perhaps just as well to note an important point. The erotic element in Indian sculpture has become a popular topic, and book after book—philosophic or pornographic—is being

published. Though perhaps secretly relished, much capital is made out of "these loose loves carved on temples of stone", and "these things humanity hides away". It is not possible here to discuss this matter in detail, though obviously it is an issue of some importance. It is enough to say that in Hindu philosophy and art, the 'mithuna'—the union of the bodies—represents the merging of the human and the divine and symbolises the return of the soul to the supreme soul, of the *atman* to the *Brahman*. What is more, many of the 'mithunas' are beautiful work ; and for those who know, the gradations between the bliss-ful 'mithuna' spiritual, and the ugly and obscene 'mithuna' carnal mark the gradation between the gods, the semi-gods, the higher human beings and the cruder human animals.

In Painting, the earliest phase culminates in the frescoes of Ajanta caves which were discovered accidentally by a company of British troops in 1819, nearly 1200 to 1800 years after they were executed. As is well-known, these have "for Asia and the history of Asian art the same outstanding significance that the frescoes of Assisi, Siena and Florence have for Europe and the history of European Art". Sprawled over the great walls and ceilings of the Buddhist Viharas and Chaityas they portray the life and legends of Gautma the Buddha and, incidentally, interpret the contemporaneous culture. Gloriously painted and arranged in a series of caves, they make a kind of picture gallery—the country's Gallery of Old Art ! But whereas the beauty of the figures drawn there and of the general composition effect are widely known, perhaps not so well known is the fact that they are marvels of technique. Writing of this, J. Griffiltus says : "The artists who painted them were giants in execution. Even on the vertical sides of the walls some of the lines which were drawn by one sweep of the brush struck me as being very wonderful ; but when I saw long delicate curves drawn without faltering, with equal precision, upon the horizontal surface of a ceiling, where the difficulty of execution is increased a thousand fold, it appeared to me nothing less than miraculous."

The influence of Ajanta was wide spread both within and without the country. However, in India mural painting ceased to have

interest for the generations which followed and the Ajanta tradition flowered into miniatures. Beginning with those of the Palas in the 9th century, these had an uninterrupted development through the successive and varied stages of the Gujrati (Jain) miniatures, the Rajput style, the Mughal Kalam, and the Pahari school (Bahsoli, Kangra etc.). Each of them, distinct in style and theme, deserves a high place in world art.

In 19th century, the art of painting declined rapidly, and there was a deplorable neglect and a spirit of apathy all over the country. Thanks, however, to well-directed efforts of men like Havell and the Tagores, that there was a healthy revival. Since then there has been a great deal of creative activity. A few specimens of the latest trends may be viewed in the Gallery of Modern Art in Jaipur House, New Delhi.

Of the medieval Hindu paintings, one achievement is worthy of special note. The 'Ragamala' is a combination of the arts of painting and music, unique in the art history of the world, and proves the old adage that all arts aspire to the condition of music. Some of these graphic representations of Ragas and Raginis of music are masterpieces of lyrical expression and colour-sense.

And this brings us to the art of arts, music. Music of India is, indeed, to say the least, "difficult" to understand or to appreciate. Used as the westerners are to a written music, based on harmony, and to a range of comparatively fewer tones, they find themselves unresponsive, and experience no aesthetic pleasure when obliged to listen to strange-sounding, long-drawn 'dadras' and 'thumris'. Some of them naturally jump to conclusions like the one by Beverly Nichols : "Indian music cannot be regarded as a serious art..... Indian music has yet to suffer the pangs of birth, the pangs which are the inevitable accompaniment of all artistic creation. It must come down to earth, out of the every-where into here. It must boldly proclaim itself on paper, in black and white....." Delightful advice about an art which is at least 3000 years old and, according to legend, even older, for it was created by Brahma himself out of

the *Sama Veda*. And delightful understanding of the essence of music, the most abstract of arts, if it is required to come down to earth !

As to notation, it has never occurred to any Indian musician to write down music in black and white—excepting of course, the modern music-maker who has to cater to the western taste, suffers from the experiment-phobia or swears by the ‘East-meet-West’ ideology. In fact, as Garrod points out in his ‘Legacy of India’, “the arrival of a notation is a sign that the modes are dying out”—modes (ragas and raginis) in hundreds of which “a good musician can sing with accuracy. This is a remarkable feat of memory and a surer guide than notation”. The other point that makes for difficulty is that there are more tones in the Indian scale, some as minute as to be one-eighth and one-ninth of the western unit of sound. Indian music therefore demands greater concentration and a finer discrimination. Indeed, in India, to be a good listener is as much of an art as to be a good player. Even though it is not entirely correct to say that “the gift of music from India is one which perhaps the western mind is not yet mature enough to appreciate”, certainly the music of India, so much older than even the greatest of European music, merits a far better understanding”.

The Dances of India are both more familiar and popular than her music. With drama, the art of dancing, constitutes the ‘fifth-veda’, the *Natya Veda*. One legend has it that Indra and other gods approached Brahma and requested that he should create a fifth veda, accessible to all the *varnas* without exception, for they desired to have a play that could be both seen and heard by all including the Shudras who were denied rightful access to the Vedas. Brahma then created a piece which Indra pleading inability to produce, was entrusted to Bharata, a man of great talent who put up the first play. Similarly in regard to the art of dancing, the origin is no less legendary and mythical. Shiva, the *Natraj*, Lord of the Dance, would dance the dance celestial ; “and all the gods gather round Him : Sarasvati plays on the *vina*, Indra on the flute, Brahma holds the time-marking cymbals. Lakshmi begins a song, Vishnu plays on a

drum, and all gods stand round about". A charming picture ! and one which may be seen in India's classical dances time and again.

The dances of India are usually divided into four schools : the truly classical *Bharat Natyam* and *Kathakali* (a pantomime) of the South, with age-old religious traditions and artistic conventions; the Kathak Dance of the North, marked by its foot-work and tempo, a secular dance, for the entertainment not of Hindu gods, but of the Mughal Kings; and the Manipuri, the 'Ras' Dance of Manipur, picturesque, graceful, in slower tempo and built round the loves of Krishna ! Thanks to the efforts of artists like Menaka, Ram Gopal, Udai Shankar and others, the western world is well acquainted with most of these styles. In addition there are the folk dances, which create a world of their own—a world of colour and gaiety which bespeaks the love of the Indians for rhythm and music.

In Drama some traditions of this ancient art have come down in popular performances like the Ram Lila, but, the theatre of Shakuntala (Kalidasa) Swapnavasavadatta (Bhasa), Mudrarakshasa (Visakhadatta), Mrichhakatika (Sudraka), etc., belongs to a past, difficult to revive in the context of modern consciousness and technique. In spite of the gallant efforts of artists like Prithvi Raj and Sambhu Mitra and the activities of Theatre centres and Dramatic Clubs growing by the score in large cities like Delhi, Indian theatre is far from being a world wonder. It has yet to find its direction.

Crafts

India's crafts tell their own story. In the shops and emporial, and in the homes of the richest and even of the humblest, one comes across something or the other which shows a great love of work, a deep sense of 'joy in the making'. As one western admirer puts it "One stands arrested at once by the Indian workman's hand. What a marvel of subtle delicacy and supple strength it is ! Simply to look at an Indian artisan's fingers is to see deft inter-twining, swift knotting, a touch certain as the grave ..." Textiles, the finest and foremost of India's crafts, in endless designs and colours, made with

a skill taught by father to son for countless generations ! In fact, the traditions of India's handiercrafts make a rock-firm institution. . Indians do not raise eyebrows in wonder when they learn that a family of image-makers in Tanjore are the direct descendants of the builders and carvers and adorners of the famous Temple. Nor do they doubt the authenticity of the information given casually by a potter that his forbears made pots in Paradise, for the god Indra ! Actually it is this hereditary skill, handed down the corridors of time, which accounts for the perfection and for the 'sure touch', which one associates with things 'made in India'.

Of the fineness of India's fabrics and their finish there have been endless tales—A bale of Dacca's muslin could be passed through a ring—The daughter of Emperor Aurangzeb was rebuked by her father on account of her 'thin' sari, wrapped seven times around ! And Bernier tells us how when a cocanut of the size of an ostrich's egg, enriched with precious stones, was opened, a turban was drawn from it, 60 cubits in length, and of a muslin so fine that you would scarcely know what it was that you had in your hand". But muslins is one item, even among textiles; there are many more—brocades, khamkhwaels, georgettes, chiffions, tissues, silks, calicos, chintzs tie-and-dye fabrics, phulkaris, lungis, woollens etc. Then there are carpets, metal ware, ivories, enamelled goods, inlay in marble, wood-work, pottery, toys, and what not. "Indeed, it is hopeless to go down the list of Indian crafts. There are so many of them"; and at so many places that the tourist is not likely to miss them. Arrayed in the bazars of India, in places like Delhi, Jaipur, Srinagar, Hyderabad, Mysore, Varanasi, Lucknow, Aurangabad, etc, they tempt the sight-seer to buy them as souvenirs of his visit. True, one cannot take away the Taj, but one may, at least, carry home its replica in marble or ivory executed with such skill and so prettily as if Ustad Isa, the architect of the world's finest mausoleum, had himself supervised its manufacture !

General Information

Arts and Crafts being intimately connected with History and Civilization, important to understand main phases :

Indus Valley Civilization (C.2000-3000 B.C.) : highly advanced in matters like city planning, sanitation etc. but architecture plain and functional. Evidence of work in bronze (Dancing figure), pottery ; and steatite seals etc. *Age of Vedic Culture (2000B.C.—550B.C.)* Few physical remains ; but powerful impact on Indian life. The Vedas, the Upanishads, Ramayana, Mahabharata, etc. laid foundation of cultural and spiritual structure. *Age of Philosophies, Buddhism and Jainism (C. 550 to 325B.C.) :* To pre-Aryan, and Aryan streams of thought and philosophy, more added to enrich, diversity and complicate religious, philosophic, ethical and cultural pattern which to be reflected in future art. *The Maurya Empire : (C.325-150 B.C.)*. Period of wide contact with outside world ; In Asoka's reign missionaries all around to spread Buddhism. Use of stone ; Asoka's Pillars and Rock Edicts ; the lion-capital of Asokan Pillar at Sarnath, example of Mauryan art ; Stupa at Sanchi.

Sakas, Guptas, Huns (200 B.C. to 700 A.D.) : More contact with Greeks; Indo-Scythian sculpture at Mathura. Brahmanical Renaissance. Miscellaneous trends; Indian influence religious and artistic, all over Asia. Sculpture and paintings of Ajanta (1st C. B.C. to 7th C.A.D.) ; Art of Mathura, Amravati etc. The *Pallavas* ; the Indo-Greek art of Gandhara. "The Golden Age of Indian art" ; works of Kalidasa etc. Harsha. Buddhist & Brahmanical art at Mathura, Sarnath and Ajanta and Brahmanical art at Deogarh, Udyagiri and Aihob. romantic medieval Brahmanical art at Badmi, Ellora and Elephanta. The monolithic rock shrines of Mamallapuram.

The Medieval Period-Early (8th 12th C.) : Various empires (The Palas, the Pratiharis, the Cholas, Chandelas etc.) and cultural and artistic trends north, south and east. The art and architecture of Orissa, Bhuvaneshwar and Konarak, of the Chandela Rajputs at Khajuraho; The Pala and Sena school of sculpture.

Later Medieval Period (12th to 16th C.) : The Muslim invasions: arts vitally affected; much

sculpture etc, destroyed or mutilated. Contribution of the Muslims-Indo-Islamic Art; The Qutab, Quwat-ul-Islam mosque at Delhi etc.

The Moghuls (1526-1750): Starting with Akbar, great revival of the arts, Architecture, Music, Painting etc. Humayun's Tomb at Delhi; Fatehpur Sikri; Akbar's Tomb at Sikandara-example of new styles and achievements. Shahjahan's great contribution especially to Architecture : The Taj; the buildings in the Fort at Agra—Pearl Mosque, Mussamman Burj; Fort and Jama Masjid at Delhi, etc.

In Rajput states great buildings put up : Man Mandir at Gwalior, Palaces at Amber, Udaipur, Jodhpur, Deeg, and so on; painting flourished greatly in Rajasthan and Kangra etc.

The British (1750-1947) : Architectural activity and general encouragement to the arts mostly in native states. British record confined to official buildings.

Contemporary : With freedom, a great zeal and interest in arts and crafts. Government's active patronage. Akadamis of Arts and Boards of Crafts to develop, encourage and generally popularise the art of India, and her handicrafts.

Architecture and Sculpture: Monuments of great excellence and merit. Such include the Taj, the Tombs of Akbar and Itmad-ud-daula, Fort and Palaces at Agra, Qutab, Shershah's Mosque, Humayun's Tomb, Red Fort and Jama Masjid, Secretariat etc. at Delhi; Palaces at Gwalior, Amber, Udaipur, Deeg, Ditiya, Mandu etc. Rani Sipri's Mosque at Ahmedabad; Shershah's mausoleum at Sasaram, Gol Gumbaz at Bijapur, and so on. Temples all over the place, famous ones at Konarak, Bhuvaneshwar, Khajuraho, Mt. Abu, Varanasi and many in the south, at Tanjore, Madura, Mahabalipuram, Kanchipuram; also Rock-cut caves and temples at Ajanta, Ellora, Elephanta, Karla, Badami, Ahiole, etc. Forts like Chittoor, Ranthambhor, Daulatabad worth seeing—Sculpture integral part of architecture; rich and high class work at most places. First rate carving at Elephanta and Ellora; Sun temple (Konarak), Lingaraj (Bhuvaneshwar). Examples of later, more elaborate and ornate work, in temples, of Khajuraho, (Dilwara) at Mt. Abu etc.

Painting: Ajanta (1st C. B. C. to 7th C.A.D.) great frescoes. Influence throughout countries around India. Development of Miniatures in India, for 1000 years. Pala school of Bengal (9-12th C) in east, mostly illuminated manuscripts. Buddhist legends provide themes; several palm leaf manuscripts still extant. *Gujarati School*, counterpart of Pala school; continuous history of 5 centuries (11th-15th C). Earlier phase of illustrated manuscripts on palm-leaf; later, on paper; best paintings belong to transition period (1350-1450 A.D.). Subject matter—Jain sacred texts, and later Vaishnava themes of Krishna-lila, and the loves of Krishna; and secular love. *Rajasthani* school (16th-17th C) in brilliant colours, show, the "Indian genius in its pure form", and "deserves to be given an honourable place amongst the great arts of the world". Themes cover entire medieval literature mostly sentiments of love (Shrinagar) and devotion (Bhakti) Krishna's legends, scenes from Ramayana and Mahabharata, ballads and romantic poems: portraits, seasons (Baramasa) and Ragamalas (Garland of Musical modes) *Pahari paintings* of sub-Himalayan (old) states of Jammu, Basohli, Chamba, Kangra, etc. allied in theme and to some extent in treatment with Rajasthani art. Krishna, his boyhood and his youth, especially his mischievous pranks and his amours with Radha, main theme of Pahari art. *Mughal Kalam* aristocratic and secular school. Akbar encouraged painting as other arts; and secular themes included. Beautiful illustrated manuscripts of 'Razmaanama' 'Hamzanama' 'Ramayana', 'Akbarnama', 'Iyar-i-Danish', etc. Jahangir's passion for painting especially of animals and birds of which many masterpieces by Ustad Mansoor. *Deccani Painting* Encouraged by rulers of Deccan states, a branch of Moghul school, though themes and technique of other school freely borrowed. After lapse of at least one century of general decline. Revival first with Western influences, better continuity with traditions. Since then a spate of heterogeneous activity and influence of all modern 'isms' evident; work of modern artist ranging between most academic and completely abstract.

Music: Two schools of (classical) Indian music: Hindustani (North) and Karnatak (South). Several main Ragas (mode, melody, tune, air) with families of derived 'Raginis', numbering 34,848; but Indian musicians never sing more than about 150 Ragas, most popular and common being nearly 50. Lovely names like Spring, Evening Beauty, Honeyflower etc. Numerous Musical instruments include the vina, the oldest; the *sitar*, the sarod, the mridangam, phakavaj, dholak, dhamru, tabla, talam, the tambura, the sarangi, the flute, the shehnai, the "jaltarang", s-shaped horns, and several more.

Dancing: Dance broadly speaking of 2 types—the Tandava, vigorous and virile; and the *Lasya*—lyrical characterised by grace, delicacy. Bharat Natyam—purest and oldest; Kath-

kali—meaning 'Story-Play'—most dramatic form; Kathak showing Muslim influence, elegant and with complicated rhythms; Manipuri, most lyrical and picturesque. Elaborate system of *Mudras* gestures, essence of Indian Dancing. Constitute a comprehensive language capable of expressing, effectively and eloquently, subtlest shade of emotion; story incredible, ideas in a transparent form like deer, fish, elephant, lotus etc. Classified under 2 heads, those of one hand, and of both, 64 root-mudras and many derived ones. In addition to classical dances, several colourful and joyous folk dances, peculiar to regions or tribes & communities etc. Panjab's Bhangra and Jhummer, Naga Dances, Santhal Dance, Gujarat's Garba; Maharashtra's Koli Dance (of fisher-folk); South India's Kolattam and Velakkali, Manipuri's Ras Dance and Dances of the Kulu and Kashmir valley etc. Many seen on Folk-Dance Festival on Republic Day in Delhi.

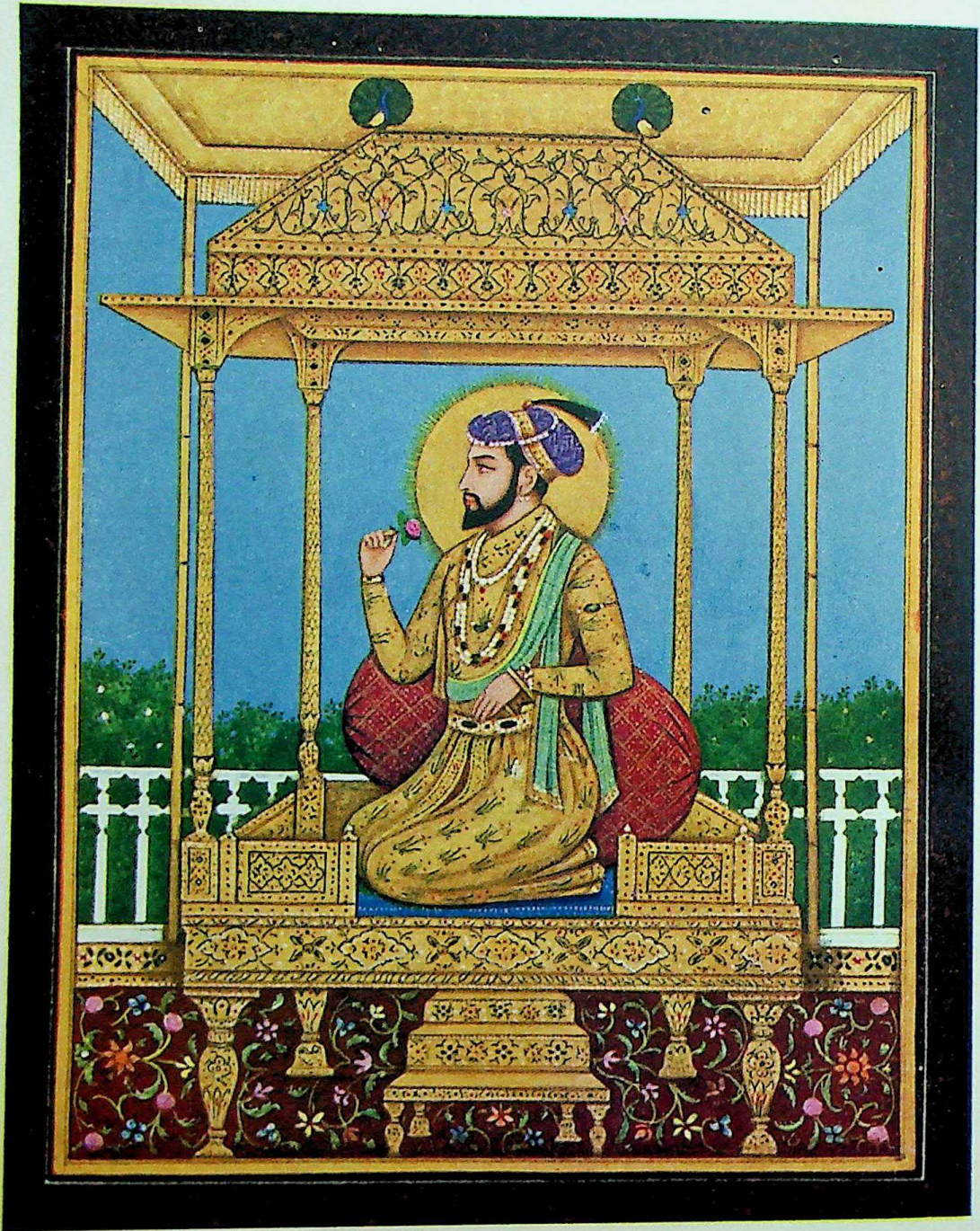
Drama: Ancient India's great achievement in this art. Dance and Drama—a unit; e.g. Kathakali. The earlier phases of modern period represented by Parsi companies and *Nautankis*. Gradual revival of art, with western, chiefly Shakespearian plays in Bengal; then indigenous element, in Hindi etc. names like Bhartendu Harishchandra. Later development deeply influenced by Western (modern) theatre and techniques; contribution by Prithvi Raj with his 'Dewar', 'Pathan' 'Gaddar', and Sambhu Mitra of 'Bahurupi' fame: Government's Sangeet Natak Academy, and (Unesco's) Theatre Centre important institutions, doing much valuable work in this field.

Handicrafts: Perfect with one flaw; too ornate—"painting the lily, gilding the gold"—; a bewildering variety of all sorts of goods, textiles, metal-ware, carpets, leather goods, papier machie, wood-work, ivories, bidri-ware, woollens, toys of all sorts, painted scrolls and miniatures, pottery, marble & stone inlay carving, jewellery etc. at centres world-famous for their special products. Government effort to encourage handicrafts part of plan; Rs. 2,000 million allocated to Village Industries. Emporia, central and state level, at several places.

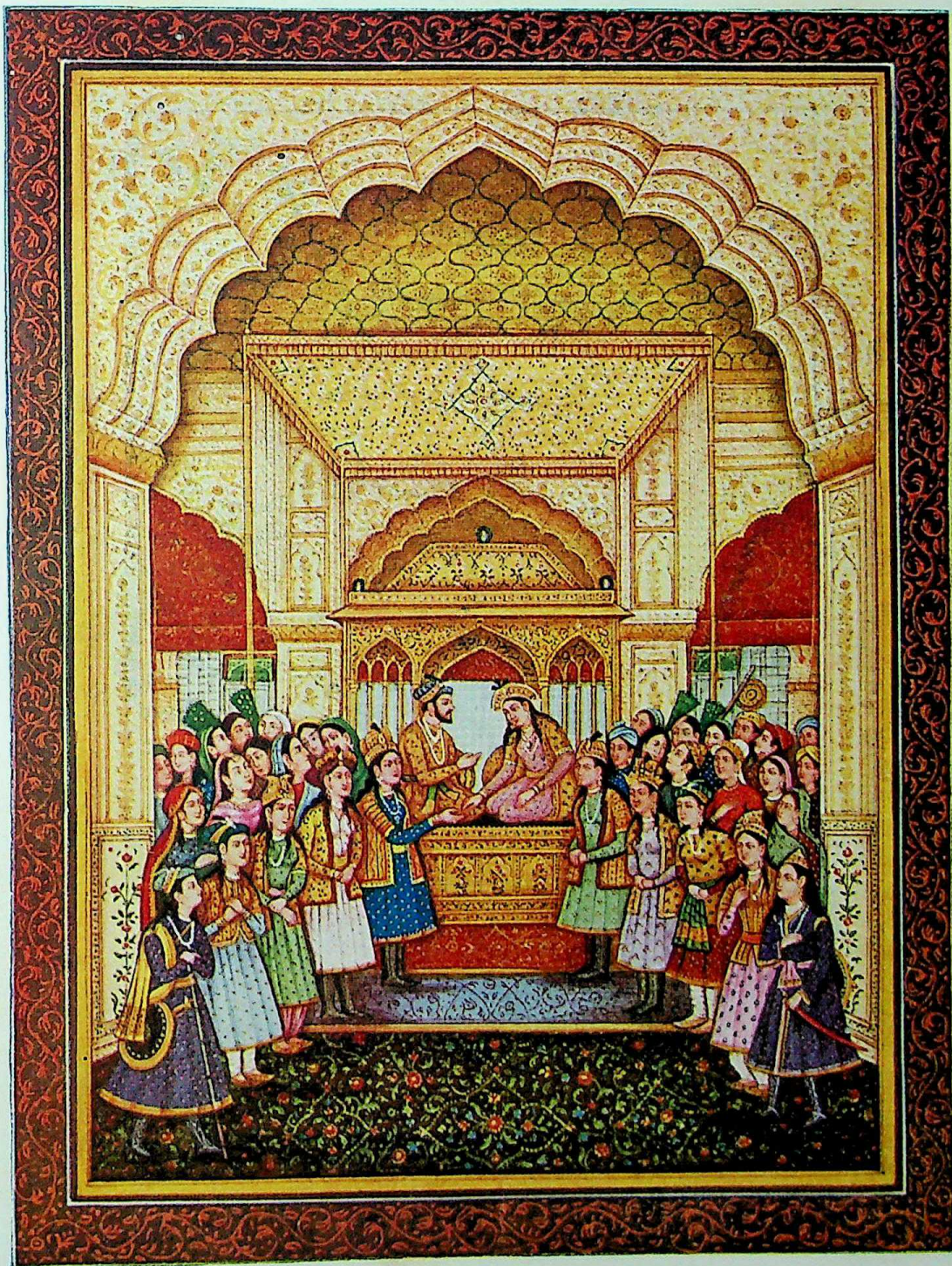
Museums & Art Galleries: Over 80 Museums in the country, where arts and crafts and articles of historical and archaeological interest displayed. Important ones include: National Museum; Central Asian Antiquities Museum, Jaipur House Gallery of National Art (Modern) in New Delhi; and Fort Museum at Delhi; Prince of Wales Museum, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, Bombay; Music and Picture Gallery of Baroda; Indian Museum, and Victoria Memorial Hall at Calcutta; Government Museum, Madras, State Museum Lucknow; Archaeological Museum, Mathura; Municipal Museum, Allahabad; Patna Museum; State Museum, Bhuvaneshwar; Central Museum, Jaipur; Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad etc. In addition, several site Museums at places like Sarnath, Khajuraho, Sanchi etc.



Dhola Maruni : This Rajput painting depicts Rajasthan's most romantic couple. Dhola was the ancestor of the rulers of old Jaipur state and his exploits are sung in many bardic ballads.



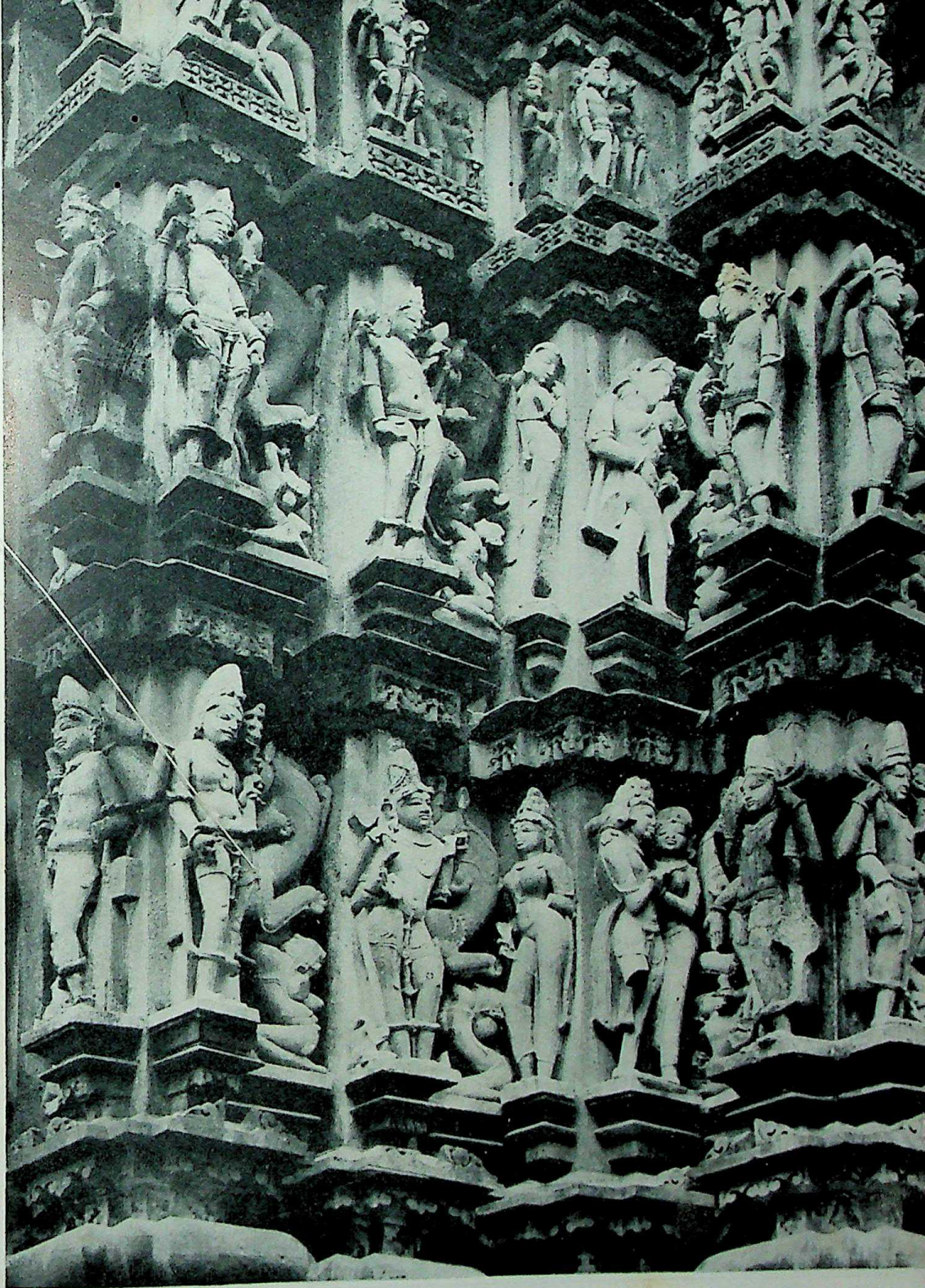
Shah Jahan : Picture of the Fabulous Mughal who gave the immortal Taj to India. A neat design, colours which are at once rich and chaste, and decorative detail distinguish the style.



Game of Chess : Mughal Royalty played chess with living pieces who were ordered to the chequered squares (not visible here). Another fine specimen of the Mughal school.



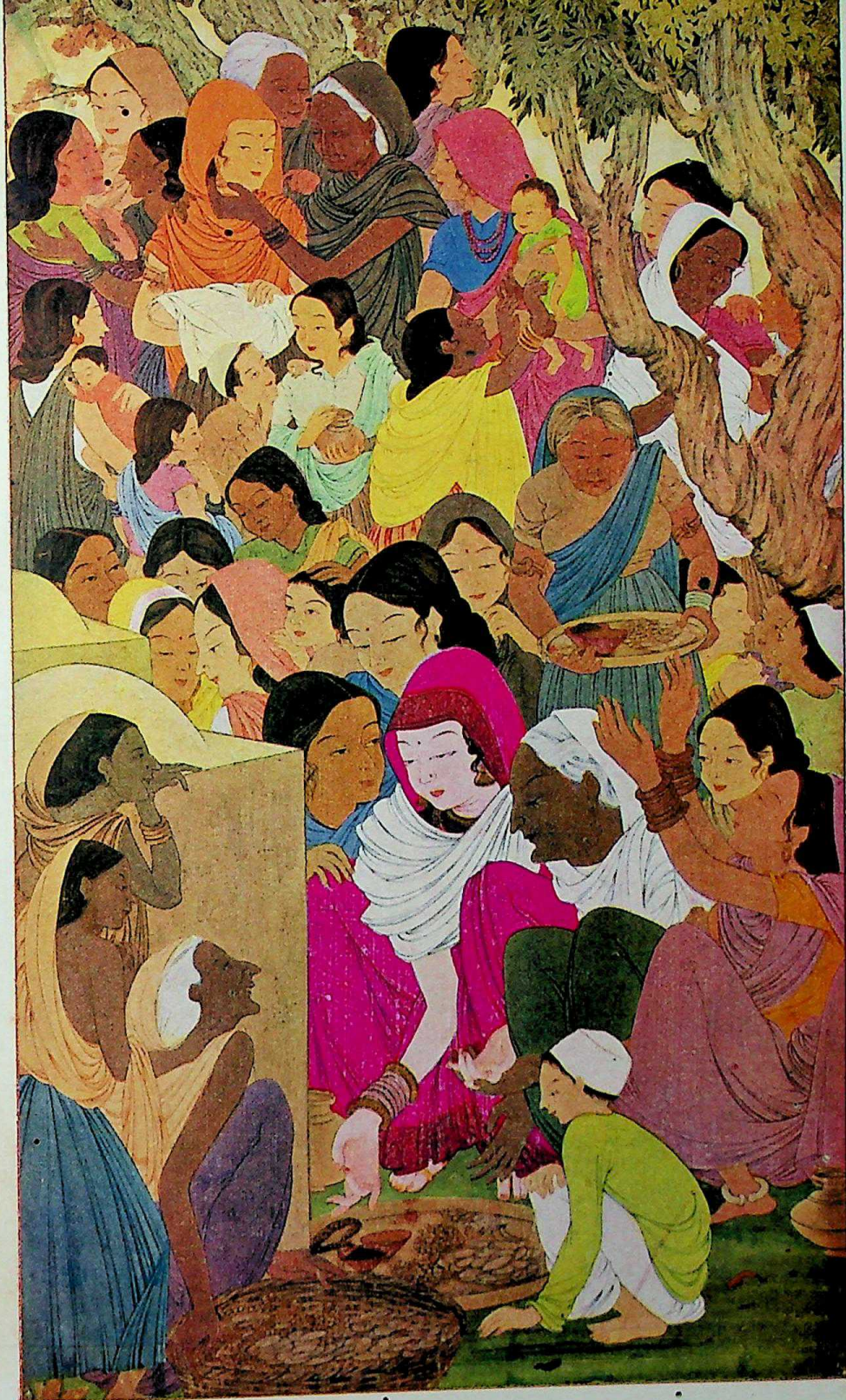
Rama's return to Ayodhya : After 14 years of exile undertaken that a father's word and a mother's wish might be honoured, Ram returns to Ayodhya and is welcomed and worshipped by his people.



Sculpture-Bands, Khajuraho : Rising in tier upon tier of exquisite sculpture, beautiful and lively figures, portrayed in an infinite variety of poses, adorn the temple-walls at Khajuraho (M.P.).



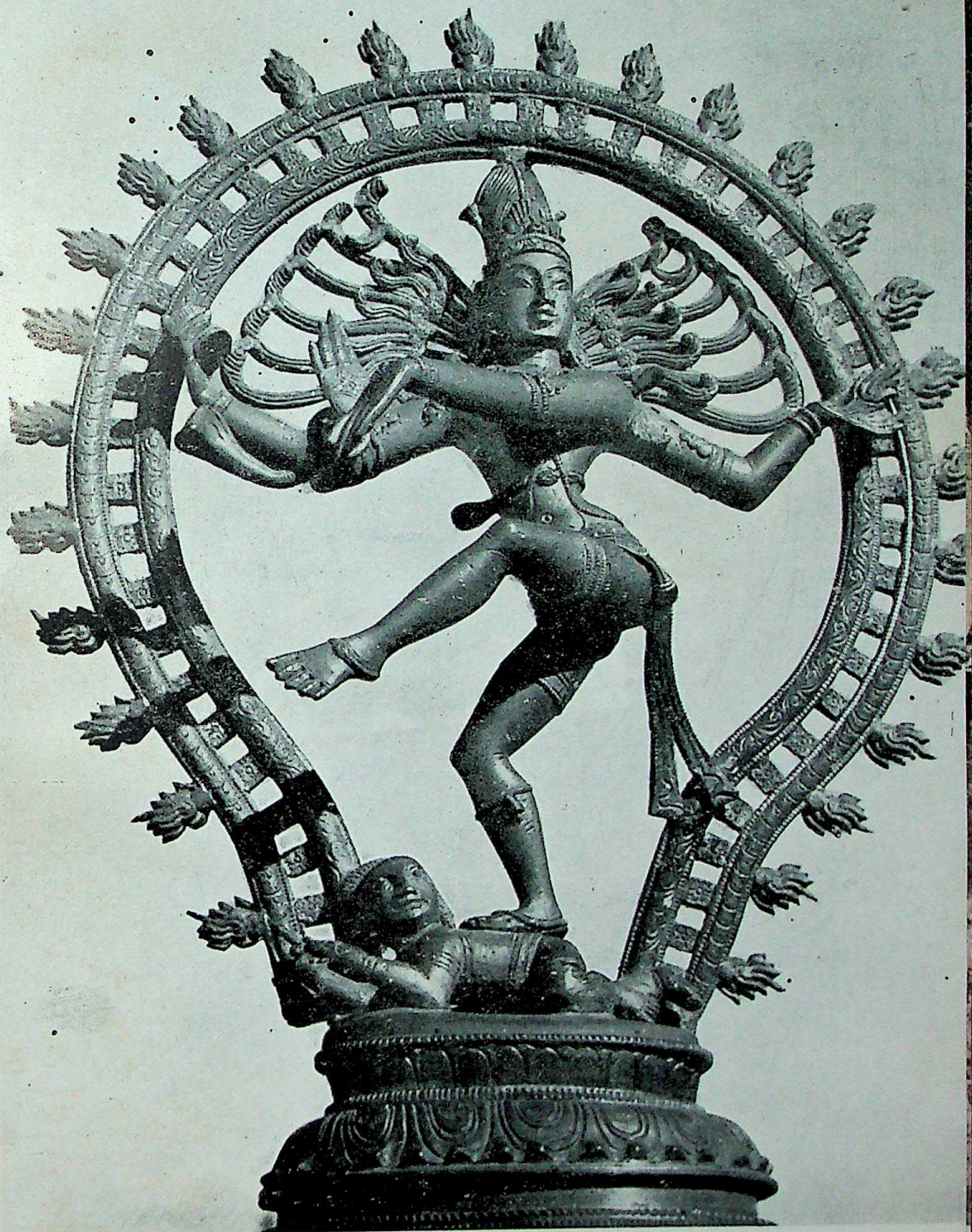
The Kiss (Khajuraho Sculpture): At Khajuraho as at many places in India, there are many erotic sculptures. These symbolise the union of the human and the divine.



Pooja : If India's people are 'God-intoxicated', generally, the women are especially so. Instinct with devotion, they take the ritual side of religion far more seriously than men do.



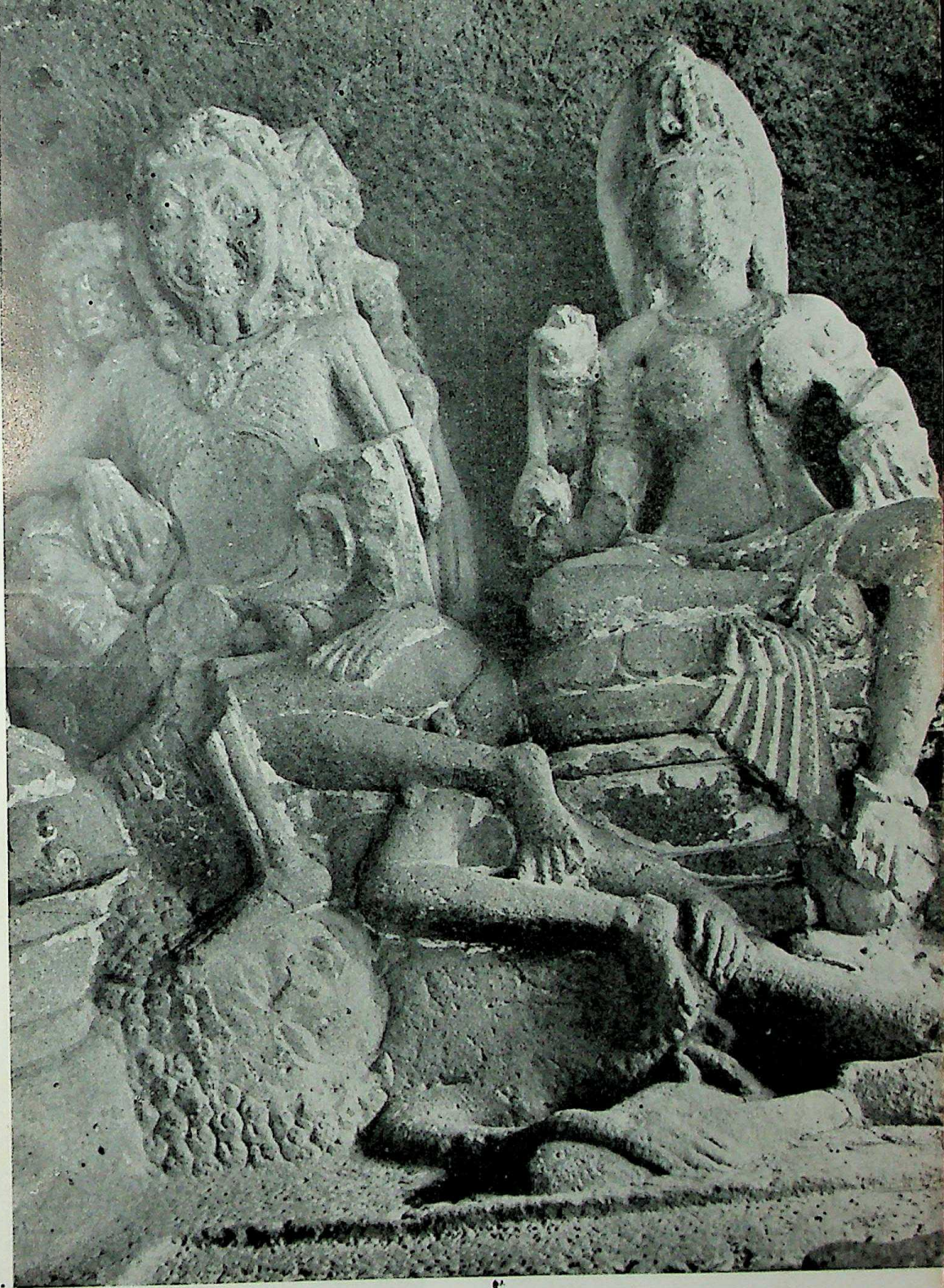
Vrindavan: Artist's impression of the place associated with the youthful Krishna. Is she a milkmaid returning from her tryst with the "stealer of hearts"?



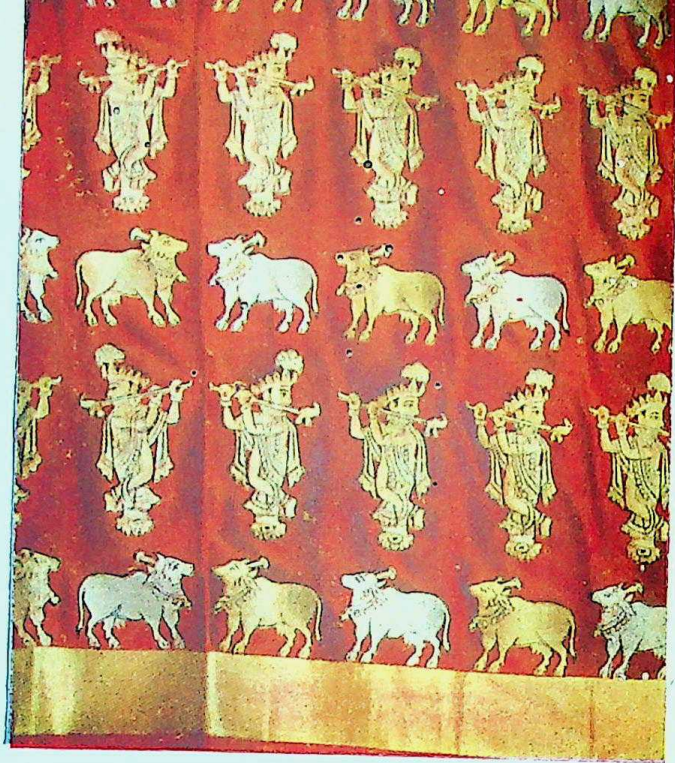
Natraj (The Cosmic Dancer): Exquisite bronze from the South depicting the great God Shiva trampling with his right foot upon the dwarf Muyalaka. A study of "Motion in Repose."



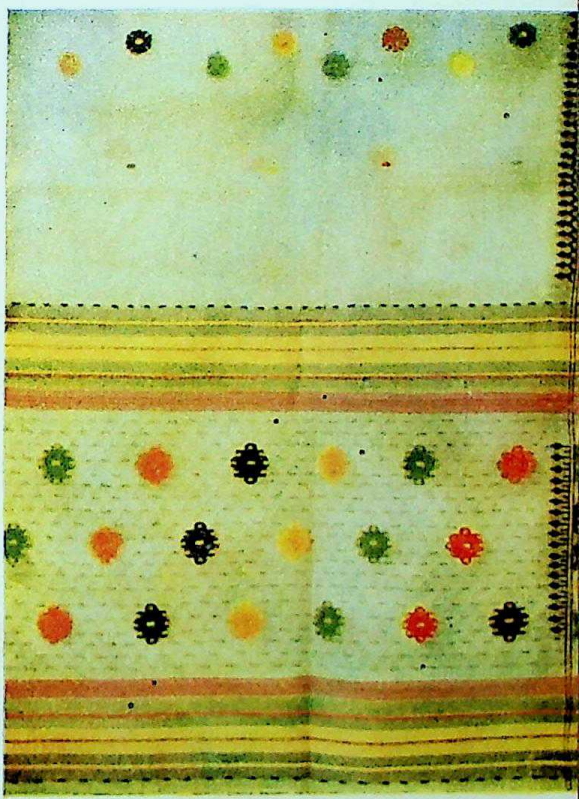
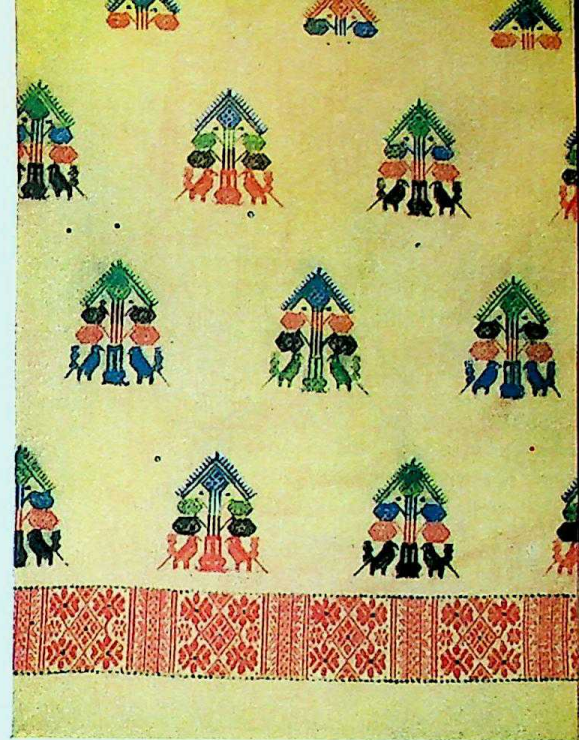
Bodhisatva Padmapani, Ajanta : In Ajanta's caves, 60 miles from Aurangabad, fresco after fresco of unrivalled beauty and grace portrays the life and legends of the Buddha.



• Figures, Ellora : 18 miles from Aurangabad are the famous Ellora caves with temples belonging to three religions. Some of the sculptures represent the high water-mark in Indian art.



Indian Textiles : Printed or embroidered, Indian textiles offer an amazing galaxy of design and colour which should satisfy the most discriminating and the most fastidious.



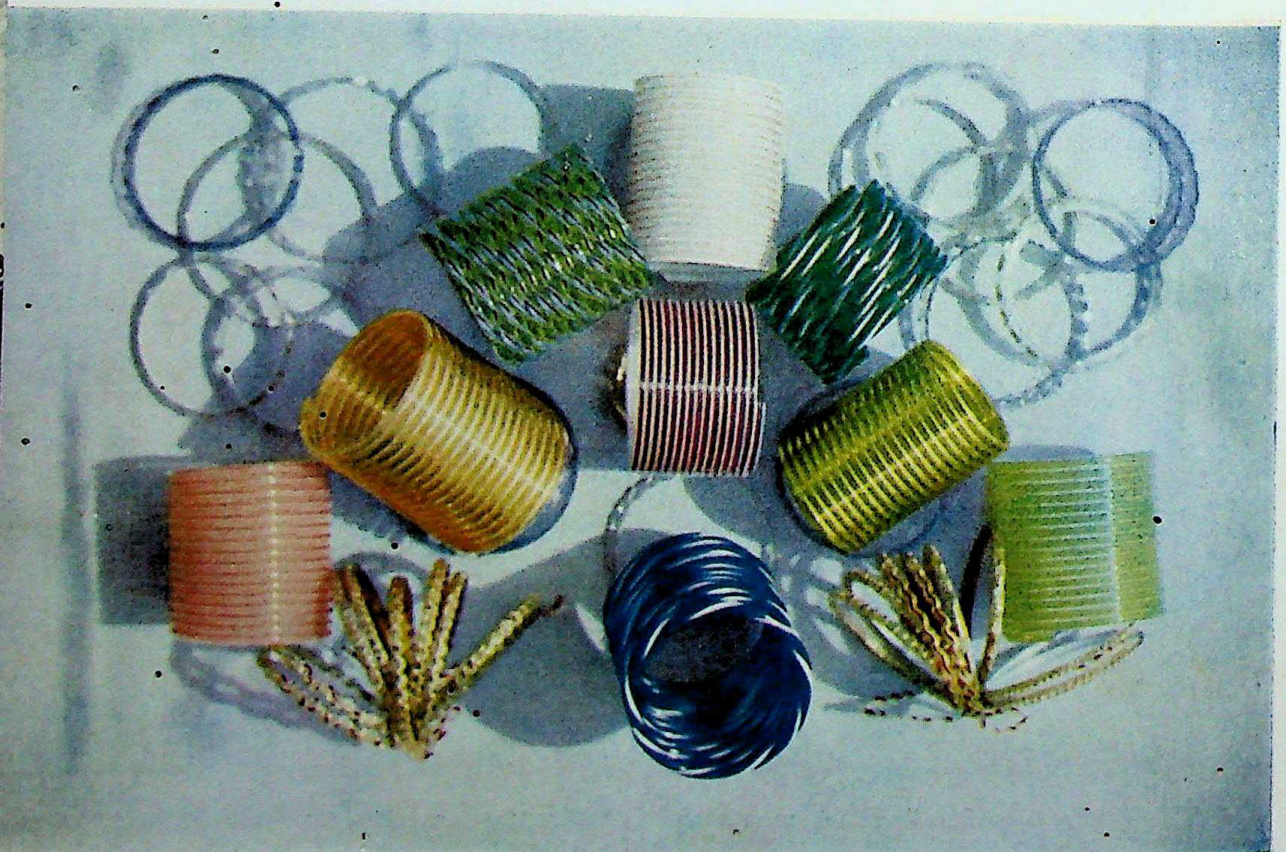
- Indian fabrics are woven in such pleasing patterns that they may be made to serve a multiplicity of purposes, and will grace the home or adorn the person equally well.



Basket Work : The material is cane or bamboo or rushes of sorts and the tools are the worker's skilled fingers. Essentially a folk-craft, basket-making is carried on in many villages.



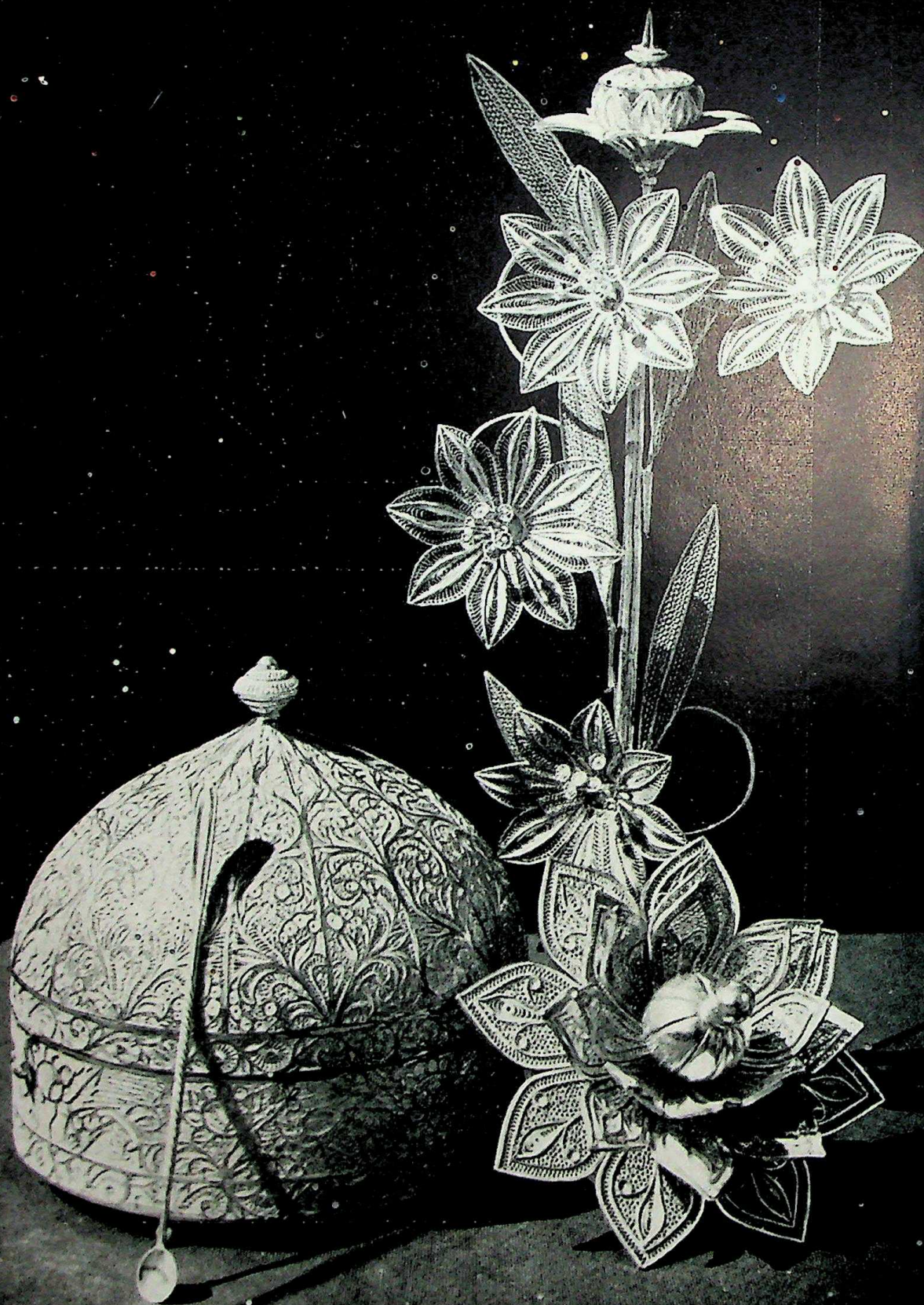
Pots from Paradise : Like most crafts of India, Pottery is as old as the people. Made in all possible colours, the products range between the purely utilitarian and the purely decorative.



1. Beads 2. Bangles : How should a girl do without beads and bangles ? From beads are created ornaments and bangles of gold or silver, of ivory, lac, or glass must cover every feminine arm.



Kashmiri Gubha : Cribbed and confined by winter snows, the Kashmiri does not brood ; he creates things of beauty. The Gubha is a patch-work carpet made from pieces of coloured blankets.



102 Filigree : From Kashmir and from Cuttack comes sparkling silver-ware. Whether translucent flower or a 'solid' cover, the product is of rare beauty and of excellent workmanship.



Ornamental Brassware : Engraved or encrusted, self-designs or in coloured 'meena-work', the fine metal-ware of Jaipur or Moradabad will yield many beautiful and yet not costly gifts.

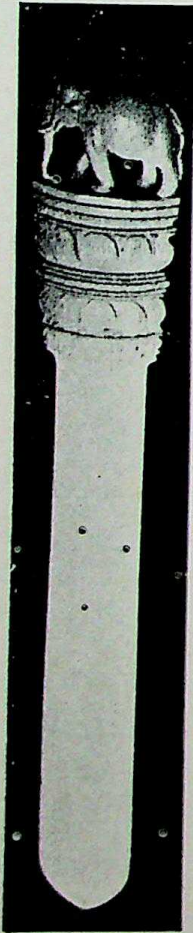
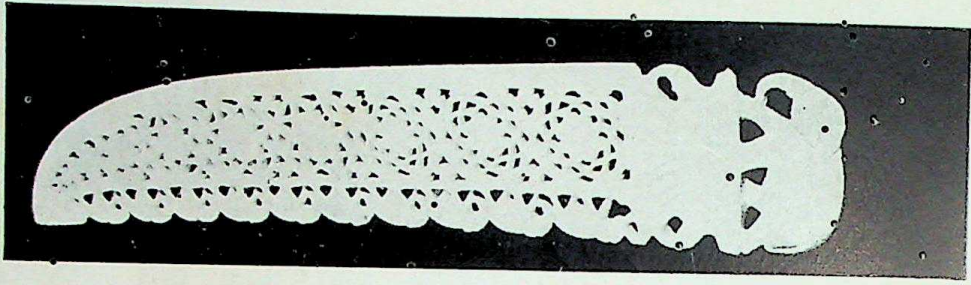


Leathercraft: Among other items, those most popular are shapely shoes for dainty feet and pretty purses in gorgeous patterns; the handbags had a late start but have more than caught up.



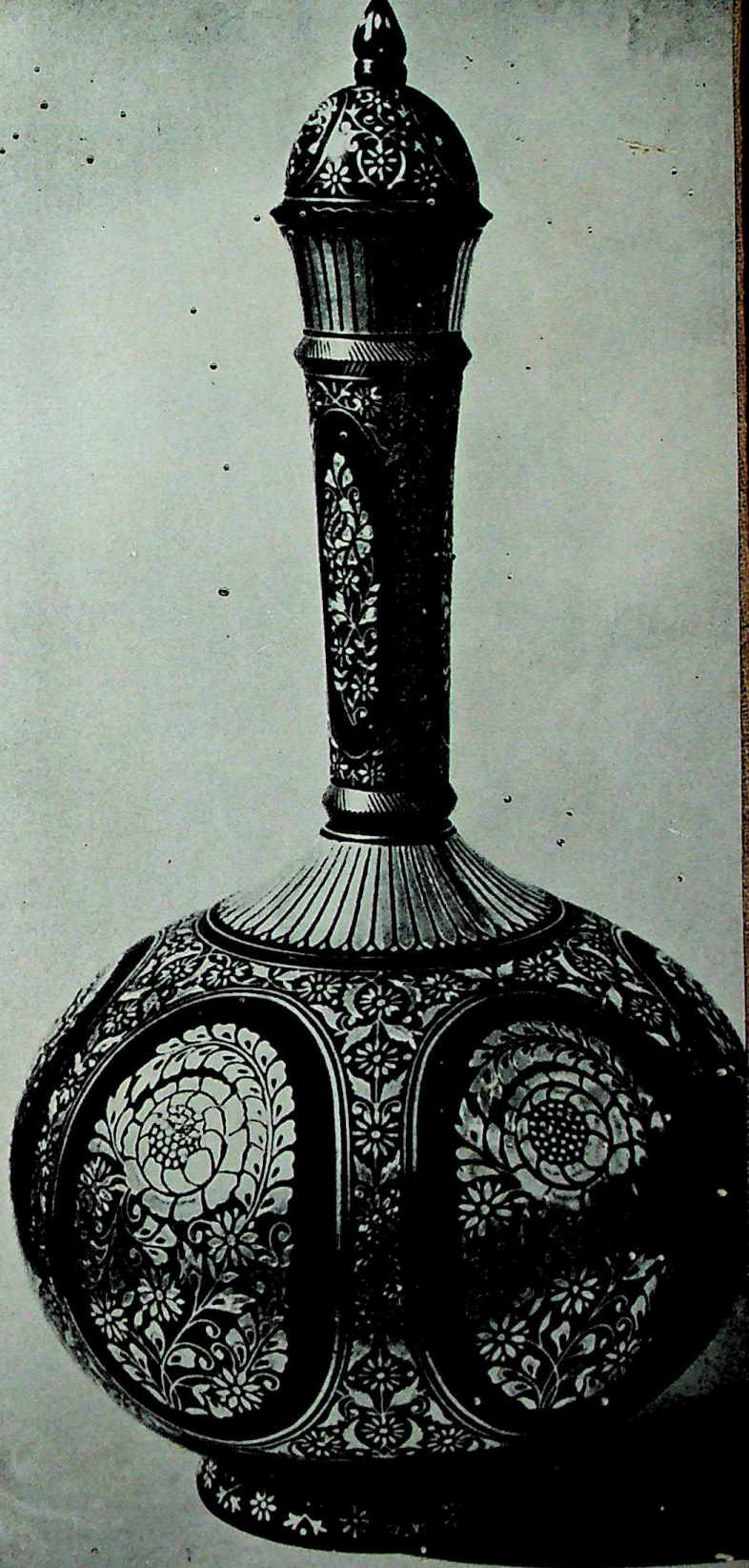


Visitors from Wonderland : From wood and cloth, from board and sugar and ivory and metal, are made toys of all sorts. Bright colours and a mocking likeness distinguish the dolls.



Ivory : Ivory-carving is difficult and intricate, and only a highly skilled craftsman can create such breath-taking loveliness. A letter opener, lamp-stand and paper-cutter are shown here.

Flask of Wine : Artistic Bidri Ware is a speciality of the craftsmen of Hyderabad. An alloy of zinc is inlaid with silver or gold and beautiful, nay, splendid articles are produced.





Value from Waste : Papier Mache work is a tribute to the genius of the Kashmiri who creates out of woodpulp such lovely and artistically painted vases and trays and lamp-shades.

Modern India

All sages agree that in silence there is wisdom, in speech much confusion ; and the sages seem to be right. In fact, it is astonishing, if not amusing, to find how ambiguous words can be, how relative their import. Thus, for instance, the word 'modern', unless elaborately qualified, may prove to be the vaguest of epithets. In Indian History, the term 'Modern India' is, at times, applied to denote the period beginning with Babar's conquest in 1526. Do we mean to discuss that period here ? Or, are we thinking of the India of which Monier Williams wrote in his admirable "Modern India", published 1878, wherein, among other things, he dismissed as a joke the possibility of English ever being the official language of this country ! What precisely, then, does "Modern India" convey ? Would not the term 'contemporary' have been a better choice ?

Nevertheless, the word 'modern' has a significance which 'contemporary' would not and could not have supplied. Ignoring for the moment what exact period of time it represents, the more dynamic term 'modern' plunges us straightaway into a whirl-pool of conflict and contrast, "of the rampantly raw and the sullenly old," in contemporary India. It leads us, without much ado, into an examination and interpretation of all the living forces, often antagonistic and uncompromisingly hostile to one another, operating in the economic, political, social, cultural, religious and other equally important fields of Indian life. As the antithesis of ancient or medieval, as an ally of the new and an opponent of the old, 'modern' implies a challenge, and expresses a sense of values opposed to and different from those which have obtained so far—different, but not necessarily better ; nor, for that matter, necessarily, any the worse.

As to the 'period', there is little doubt in the mind of the average Indian. The general feeling is to treat the pre-Independence era as the "Dead Past". For several other reasons too, psychological, sentimental and even rational, it is best to let Modern India be synonymous with Free India. "At the stroke of the midnight hour when the world sleeps, India will wake to life and freedom. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again", thus Nehru on the night of 14-15th August, 1947. Surely, there could be no better point of time to usher in the Modern India than that when she became the mistress of her own destiny. In any case, for the purposes of this brief survey, this approach will be kept in view.

Of this India which discovered herself again, the usual picture is that of over-done "contrasts" and "anachronisms". One thinks of phrases like "Although India is primarily agricultural, she has some large modern plants"; or, "Along with modern means of transportation India retains her ancient ones," or, again, "India builds roads and digs ditches and canals largely by hand"; or, of juxtapositions and antagonisms like Machine *Vs.* Man, Materialism *Vs.* Spirituality; Mammon *Vs.* God; Democracy *Vs.* Totalitarianism; Individual *Vs.* State; Industrialism *Vs.* Agrarianism and the Japanese method of cultivating paddy *Vs.* the Indigenous. Now all these may mean much, or nothing at all. For these may stand for forms and trappings, and not the reality and essence, either of the old or of the new. After all, modernity does not lie in Coco Cola and Pepsi Cola, or in nylon shirts and racing cars, even as the earlier phases of India's culture and civilization cannot be explained away in terms of hand-loom, idols of stone, and bullock carts. Modernity is a "question of outlook", is a matter of the spirit and thought, and of ends and values, and not merely, if at all, of ways and means :

*Men should be judged not by their tint of skin,
The Gods they serve, the vintage that they drink,
Nor by the way they fight, or love or sin !
But by the quality of thought they think.*

What matters is not how they dig, with hands or giant earth-

removers, but what they dig and to what end; not how they travel, by camels or rockets, but what is their destination; not what implements and instruments with which they will realise them, but what their dreams and aspirations are! Let us not confuse the limitations of a people's material resources with "the quality of the thoughts they think". What is significant, therefore, is not the clash of hands and machines, of ancient tools and modern appliances, but the clash of wills and views in respect of the more vital issues that affect the national life.

On this theme of ideological differences, there are endless variations; obviously it is not possible here to consider all the shades of thought and opinion between the reddest of reds at one end, and all the greenery-yallery at the other. Nor is it really necessary to do that. For, between the views of Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, of whom Nehru had said, "Gandhi is India", and those of Nehru, his spiritual successor, of whom the world says: "Nehru is India", much ground, in fact all that is of importance, may be covered.

This does not mean, of course, that, here in India, there are no areas of agreement. On the contrary, in regard to several matters, no nation could be more unanimous. Having determined her own political pattern and social and economic set-up, India's international relations are guided by her faith in the principle of peaceful coexistence, in the philosophy of the 'Pancha Shila'. Her stand is summed up by Nehru: "There is talk of cold war and rival camps and groupings and military blocks and alliances, all in the name of peace. We are in no camp and in no military alliance. The only camp we should like to be in is the camp of peace and goodwill which should include as many countries as possible and which should be opposed to none".

Nor are there two opinions, anywhere in the country, regarding the questions of poverty, of the hopelessly low, standard of living, of illiteracy and of the general plight and of the rights of the people. In his Independence speech on the night of the 14th August, 1947 in the Constituent Assembly, Nehru had said, "The ambition of the

greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but so long as there are tears and suffering so long our work will not be over". The Constituent Assembly drew up directive principles which lay down that the State shall strive "to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice—social, economic and political—shall inform all the institutions of the national life", and that the State shall "direct its policy in such a manner as to secure the right of *all* men and women to an adequate means of livelihood". Among the other directives of State policy is the provision for free and compulsory education for all children up to the age of fourteen. A decade has gone by, but there is no confusion in respect of these needs. Only a few months ago, Nehru declared: "Poverty is a degradation, and the obvious reaction is to get rid of it...In India our problems today are essentially of economic development and higher standard of living. We have deliberately laid down as our objective a socialistic pattern of society." It is realised more than even that 'education is the base of progress', and, in recent years several universities, scores of colleges and hundreds of schools have been set up to cater to the needs of millions of knowledge-hungry boys and girls, and to train technical personnel required for the vast plans drawn up for the material progress and social advancement of the nation. And much more is being done.

So far, so good; yet, in a sense the area of agreement has already cut into the field of friction. In the word 'technical', lies a veritable mine of highly inflammable matter. True, most people agree with Nehru on this seemingly harmless question of science and technology and believe that "the advance of science and technology makes it definitely possible to solve most of the economic problems of the world and, in particular, to provide the primary necessities of life to every one all over the world. It holds the promise of higher standards and avenues of cultural development opening out". From that point of view, they perhaps regret that "In India we have entered belatedly into the phase of industrial revolution. We have done so at a time when parts of the world are in the jet and nuclear

age". Obviously, then, to reap the benefits of western civilization, we must take freely from the west, freely and quickly.

This is where Gandhī comes in, emphatically. One might ignore a pronouncement like the rather rhetorical: "How little science knows. There is more in life than science; and there is more in God, than in chemistry"; but how is one to react to utterances like the following:

"I refuse to be dazzled by the seeming triumph of machinery...

"Industrialism is, I am afraid, going to be a curse for mankind. Industrialism depends entirely on your capacity to exploit, on foreign markets being open to you, and on the absence of competition!"

"I do not believe that industrialization is necessary in any case for any country. It is much less so far India. Indeed I believe that Independent India can only discharge her duty towards a groaning world by adopting a simple but ennobled life."

"Pandit Nehru wants industrialization because he thinks that, if it is socialised, it would be free from the evils of capitalism. My own view is that the evils are inherent in Industrialism and no amount of socialization can eradicate them."

In more general terms, he gives his view of the entire fabric of western civilization thus:

"There is nothing to prevent me from profiting by the light that may come from the west. Only I must take care that I am not over-powered by the glamour of the west. I must not mistake the glamour for true light."

And finally,

"That you cannot serve God and Mammon is an economic truth of the highest value...we have to make our choice. Western nations are today groaning under the heel of the monster God of materialism. This land of ours, was once, we are told, the abode of the Gods. It is not possible to conceive Gods inhabiting a land which is made hideous by the smoke and the din of mill chimneys and factories and whose roadways are traversed by rushing engines, dragging numerous cars crowded with men who know not for the most part what they are after...I refer to these things because they are held to be symbolical of material progress. But they add not an atom to our happiness..."

That much for science, technology, industrialization, and the light of western civilization. Against this, let Huxley say that "spirituality

is the primal curse of India and the cause of all her misfortunes." Let exuberant minds and hot tempers yearn "to grasp this sorry scheme of things entire and, shattering it to bits, remould it nearer to the heart's desire. But Gandhi counts. And to realize how deep is the impress of Gandhi's personality on the Indian mind, it is well to remember the words of Acharya Kripalani: "The Mahatma is more right when he is wrong than we are when we are right". No wonder that Nehru, as much a product of the Indian civilization as of the western, strives to weigh carefully the pros and cons of these most delicate issues, these affairs of great pith and moment. India must keep watch that she does not get caught between "the two great streams of thought, one surcharged with activities, the other with passivities", and must "weld together all that is good and true in either".

Action is the essence of life, and neither individuals nor nations can afford to be perpetually reflecting over right and wrong. They must act and be on the move. India too has made her choice, taken her decisions, set her direction, fixed her destination. In many matters, she is clear. In others, she is willing to learn. Yet in all her ways, she would be temperate. She realizes that the path is long and arduous, but she is certain of where she wants to get: On the 15th August 1947, when she awoke from her long dark slumbers, she already had a clear vision of her futurity.

Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high;

Where knowledge is free;

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls;

Where words come out from the depth of truth;

Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection;

Where the clear streams of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit;

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening thought and action—

Into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.

General Information

Fundamental Rights in Constitution adopted Jan. 26, 1950. Of the former, among others, important ones, *the Right of equality* which includes equality before the law, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and equality of opportunity in matters of public employment; the *Right* to freedoms of speech and expression, assembly, association or union, movement, residence, acquisition, holding and disposal of property and the right to carry on any occupation, trade or business. Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience, and free profession, practice and propagation of religion for all and the right of minorities to conserve their own culture, language and script and to receive education and establish and administer educational institutions of their choice. Untouchability abolished. Important right *against* exploitation prohibiting all forms of forced labour, child labour and traffic in human beings. All citizens enjoy a single and uniform citizenship for the whole of India, and every person, not less than 21, has Right of vote.

Directive Principles lay down State shall strive "to promote welfare, of people by securing and protecting, as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice—social, economic and political—shall inform all institutions of national life; the State required to direct its policy in such a manner as to secure the right of all men and women to an adequate means of livelihood, pay for equal work, and, within the limits of its economic capacity and development, to make effective provision for securing right to work, education and public assistance in event of unemployment, old age, sickness and disablement or other cases of undeserved want. State also required to secure to workers humane conditions of work, a decent standard of life, and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities. In economic field, State to direct its policy so as to secure distribution of ownership and control of material resources of community to subserve common good and to ensure that operation of economic system not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to common detriment. State also enjoined to guard against abuse of worker's health and strength and to protect childhood

and youth from being forced by economic necessity to enter avocations unsuited to their age or strength, against exploitation and against moral and material abandonment. Among other directives of State Policy, 'the organisation of agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines; promotion of cottage industries in rural area; raising level of nutrition and improvement in the standards of living and public health; prohibition of intoxicating drinks and drugs; provision for free and compulsory education for all children up to age of fourteen; separation of judiciary from executive; promulgation of a uniform civil code for whole country; and *promotion of international peace and security, just and honourable relations between nations, respect for international law and treaty obligations, and settlement of international disputes by arbitration.*'

Economic Planning: Apart from important political events like merging and intergration of princely States (completed Jan. 1, 1950) and Reorganization of States comprising Union territories, (relevant Acts passed September 1956) and two general elections (1951, 1957), economic planning dominant feature of modern India. *India's national and per capita income* in 1951 before plans, 95,300 million and 265.2 rupees respectively at current prices, and 88,500 million and 246.3 respectively at 1948-49 prices... Rather low for a country rich in national resources and man power, and whose resources, human as well as material, capable, of fuller exploitation and more intensive utilization. *Planning Commission* set up in March, 1950, with objective of initiating a process of development which will raise living standards and open out to people new opportunities for a richer and more varied life;—process aiming not merely at development of resources in a narrow technical sense, but at development of human faculties and building up of an institutional frame work adequate to needs and aspirations of people". Long term objective to double the per capita income and to raise consumption standards nearly 70% by, possibly before 1977.

First Five-Year Plan: Covering period April 1951-March 1956, aiming at preparing or laying foundation for more rapid develop-

ment, made a modest outlay of approx. Rs. 20,000 million distributed over major heads: Agriculture and Community Development—2,990 m; Irrigation and Power—5,850 m; Industries and Mining—1,000 m; Transport and Communications—5,320 m; Social Services (Education, Health, Labour Welfare, etc.)—4,230 m.

Short-term and long-term objectives of First Plan achieved by and large; national income increased at constant prices to about Rs. 100,480 million, per capita income to Rs. 274 and per capita consumption by 8%.

Second Five-Year Plan: Covering period April 1956-March 1961; objectives an increase of 25% in national income; rapid industrialization with particular emphasis on development of basic and heavy industries; large expansion of employment opportunities; and a reduction of inequalities in income and wealth and a more even distribution of economic power.

Total outlay Rs. 48,000 million distributed over major heads; Agriculture and Community Development—5,680 m; Irrigation and Power—860 m; Industry and Mining—8,800 m; Village and Small Industries—2,000 m; Transport and Communications—13,450 m; Social Services (Education, Health, Labour Welfare etc.)—8,630 m. Of total outlay Rs. 38,000 m. represent investment-expenditure on building up of productive assets, and Rs. 10,000 m. current development expenditure. In addition, likely investment in Private Sector over Second Plan Period Rs. 24,000 m. For implementation, reliance on external assistance of 11,000 m. rupees. Much generosity and active sympathy shown by several countries in this respect and substantial help given and offered.

Science and Scientific Research: Planning, especially Second Plan, vitally concerned with converting agrarian economy into industrial economy, and, generally, promoting scientific methods and research to that end, as well as to serve in other fields like agriculture etc... In spite of earlier scientific traditions and achievements in mathematics, astronomy, surgery, medicine, metallurgy, etc., 'science and technology' in India generally neglected until importance of scientific and industrial research realized during second world war when India became supply centre for Allied forces. With Independence, greater emphasis on this matter, so that *Government Policy* with regard to science and scientific research as announced in March 1958, to "foster, promote, and sustain, by all appropriate means the cultivation of science, and scientific research in all its aspects—pure, applied and educational—and, in general, to secure for the people of the country all the benefits that can accrue from the acquisition and application of scientific knowledge". Scientific research

carried out mainly through the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research and various national laboratories or research institutes like National Physical Laboratory or Central Road Research Institute at New Delhi. For Nuclear Research and Atomic Energy, Atomic Energy Commission responsible. Medical Research and Agricultural Research carried out under direction of Indian Council of Medical Research founded 1912, and Indian Council of Agricultural Research established 1929, respectively.

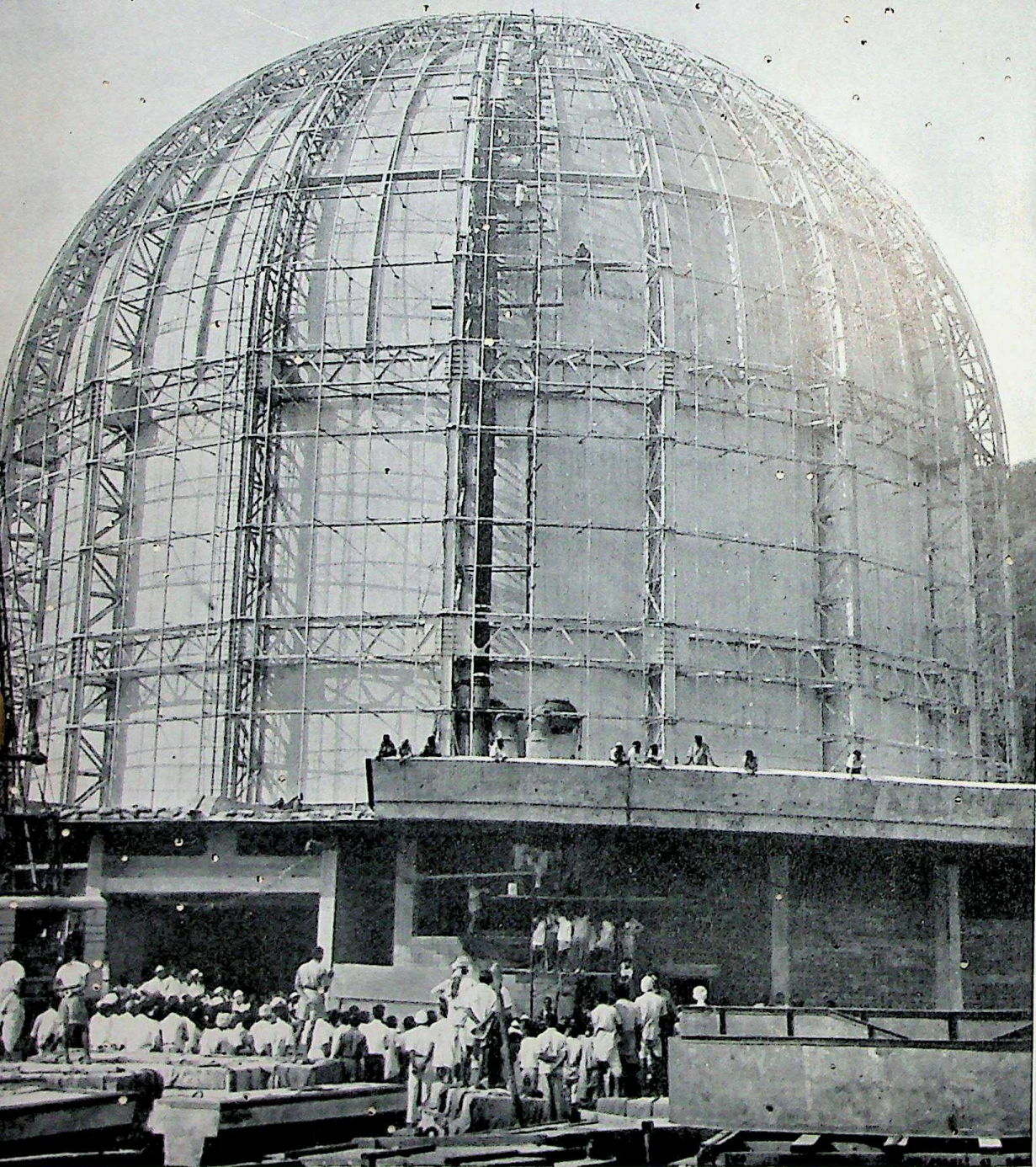
Industry: Industrialisation keynote of planning in modern India; both heavy and light industries; and cottage and small industries; "Mixed Economy" pattern for industrial development of country, with demarcated Public and Private sectors. Apart from increasing output of established major industries, innumerable new basic and small, capital and consumer industrial items taken up. Over-all manufacture and production list something like: steel; ship-building; aircrafts; locomotives; automobiles; railway coaches; telephones; machine-tools; glass; cement; paper, ceramics; electronic equipment; radio sets; cables and wires; storage batteries; soap, bicycles; sewing machines; sugar; rayon; hurricane lanterns; vanaspati; electric lamps; fans; motors; newsprint; razor blades; fertilizers; heavily chemicals; diesel engines; pumps; ball bearing; textile machinery; plywood; domestic refrigerators; linoleum; leather cloth; instruments; hospital appliances; foods and beverages; drugs and medicines; etc.

Power and Irrigation: Another important field in which many projects and much progress. Power needed for rapid industrial expansion to be made available through Coal, electricity and nuclear energy. Present coal production of nearly 40 million tons to be increased to 60 m. by 1960-61, which estimate of increased demand by then. Electricity capacity of 3.4 million K.W. to be raised to 6.9 million K.W. by end of Second Plan period through several multipurpose projects like 'Damodar Valley; 'Bhakra'; 'Hirakud' etc. now in operation, or nearing completion. Nuclear energy—present position, India's first atomic reactor 'Apsara' already built at Trombay near Bombay; second, Canada-India Reactor, N RX type, under construction same place with Canadian assistance; and third 'Zerlina', Zero energy reactor for lattice in investigation also expected to be in operation before long. India expected to have her first atomic power station by 1962.

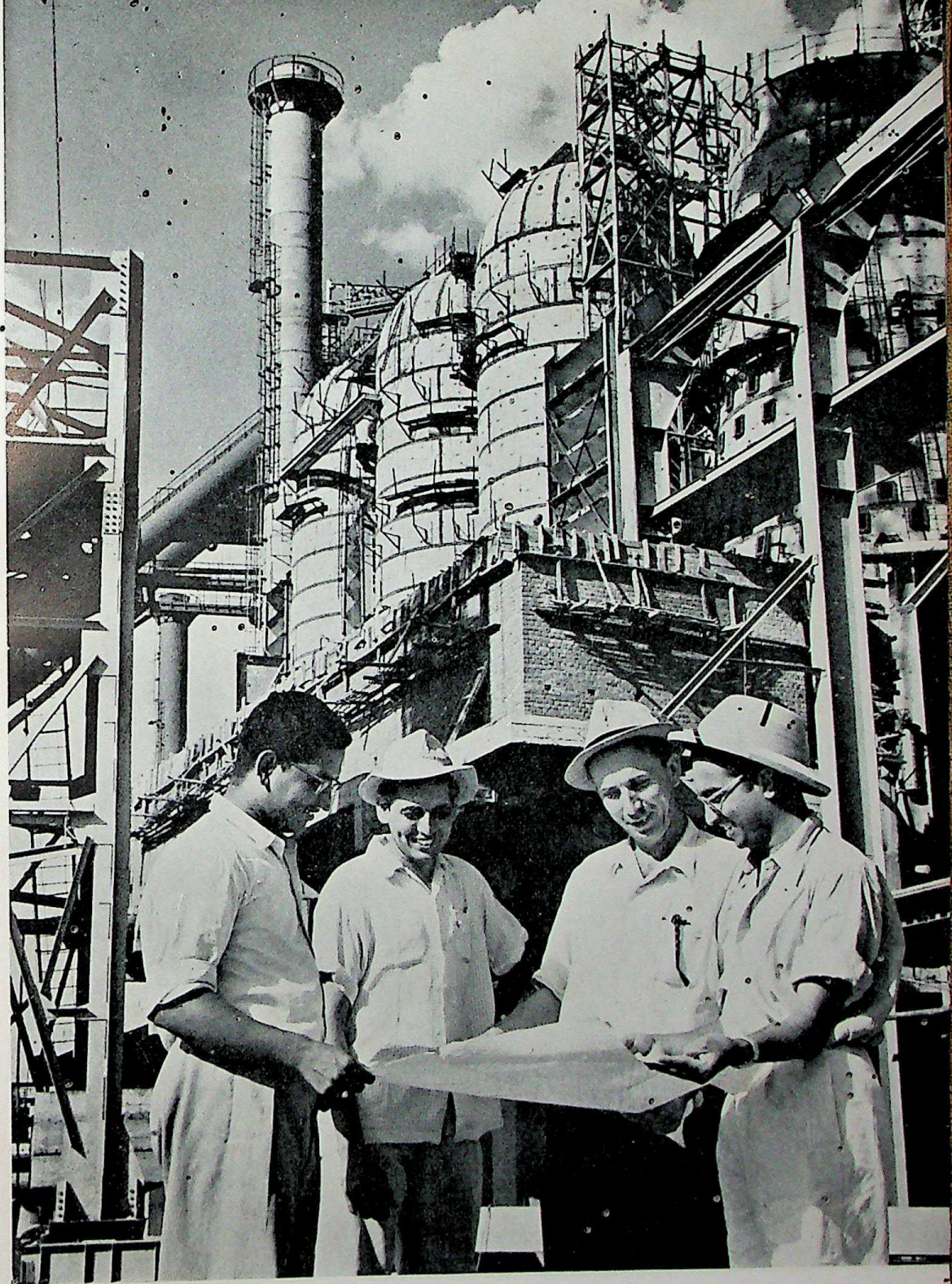
To double within 15 or 20 years the irrigated area, several important river-valley projects and hundreds of big and small schemes. Principal irrigation projects and schemes include *Bhakra-Nangal Project*, *Hirakud Dam Project*, *Rajasthan Canal Project*, *Dardodar Valley Project*, *Tungabhadra Project*, *Kosi Project*, *Chambal Project*, etc.



Nehru : At 70, still 'agile in body and alert in mind', Nehru is "the India of today, her spirit, her conscience, her faith". This highly controversial study is by Epstein.



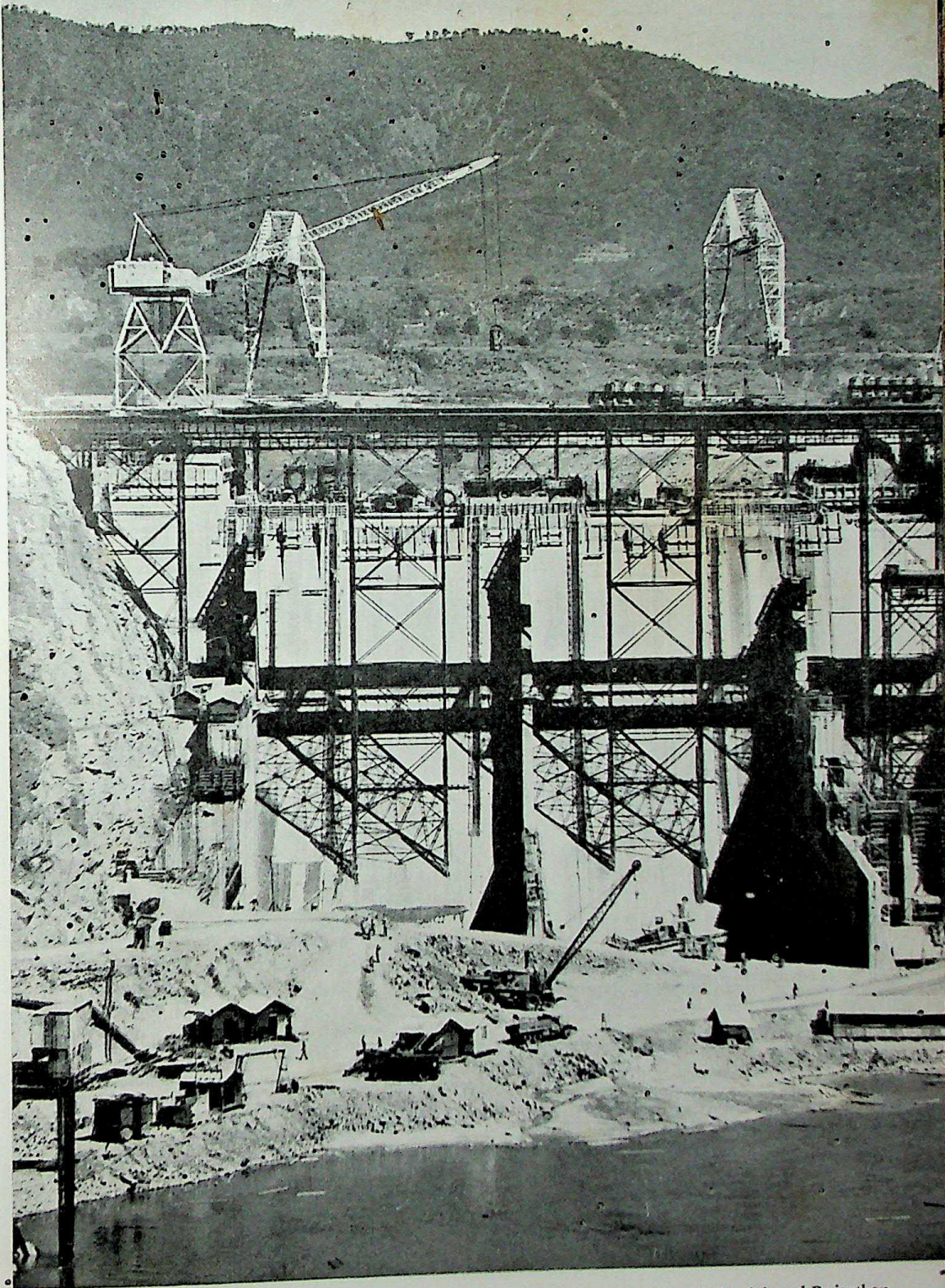
Atomic Reactor, Trombay : The beautiful name 'Apsara' links this achievement of Modern India with her heaven of Mythology whose celestial damsels the apsaras are. Two other reactors are under construction.



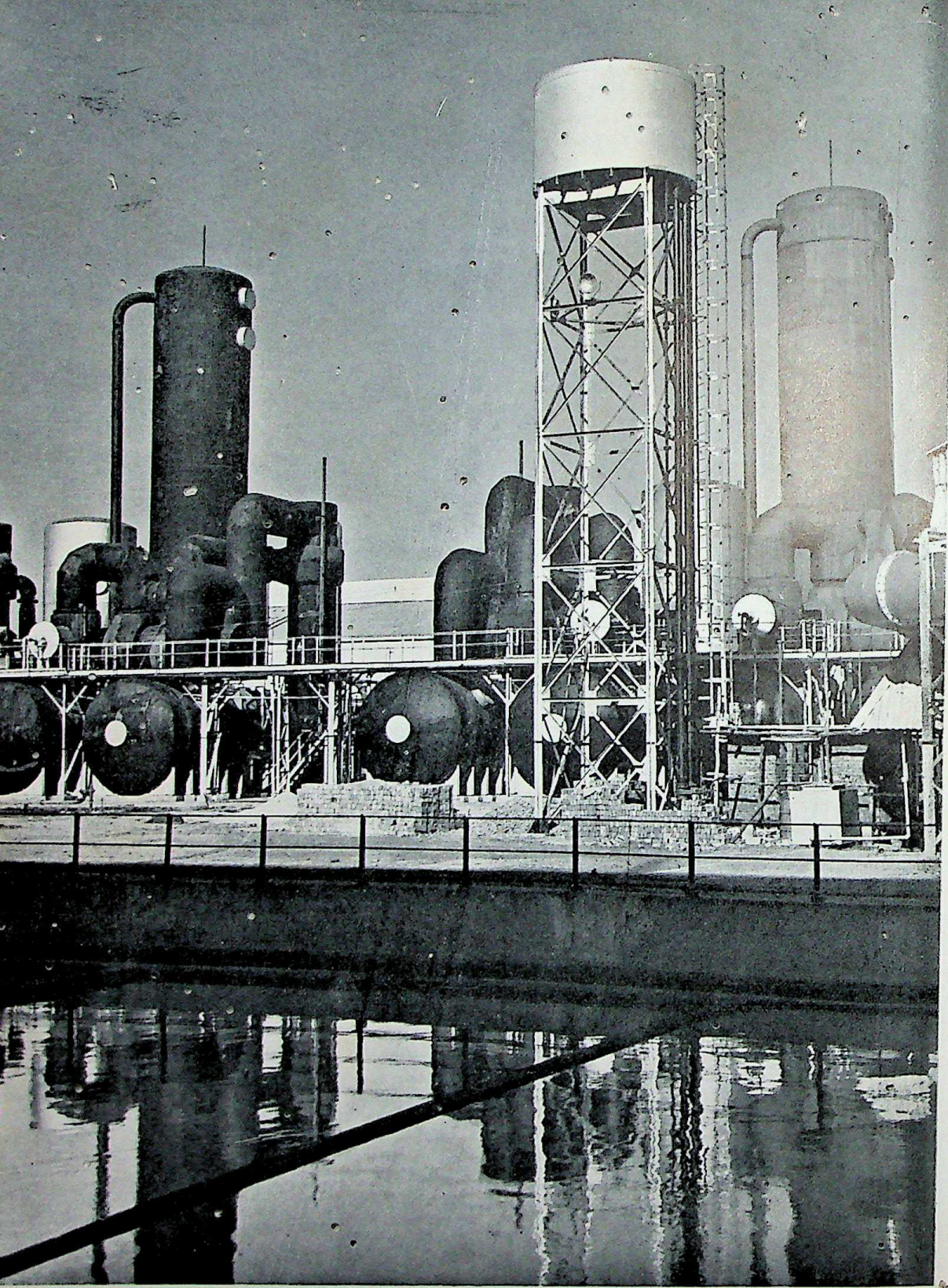
Steel Plant Bhilai (Madhya Pradesh) : To meet India's steel requirements, three new plants have come up. Of these the one at Bhilai, has been set up with Rössiar collaboration.



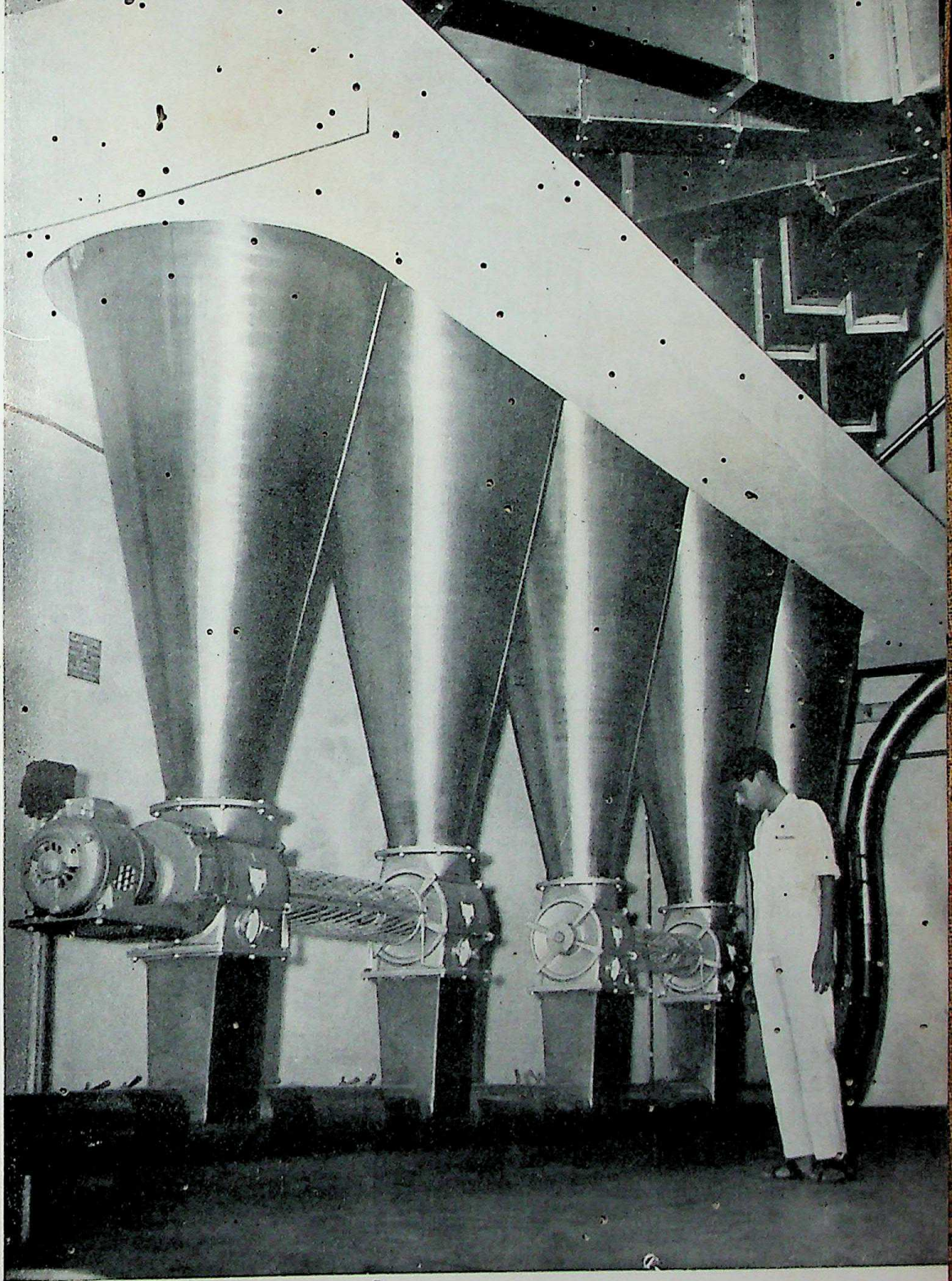
Steel Plant Rourkela (Orissa) : India's biggest steel Plant under the Second Plan, set up with German assistance ; it envisages a production of 7,20,000 tons per annum.



Bhakra Dam (Punjab) : Designed to provide irrigation for large tracts in Punjab and Rajasthan the Bhakra Dam over the River Sutlej is the world's highest straight gravity dam.



Fertilizer Factory Sindri (Bihar) : One of the biggest in Asia, this factory was almost the first of the country's development schemes. It went into production in 1951, and costs Rs. 283m.



Aarey Milk Colony, Bombay : Located in a setting of natural beauty the supply centre of the City's requirements in milk is a most modern affair and a model for other big cities.



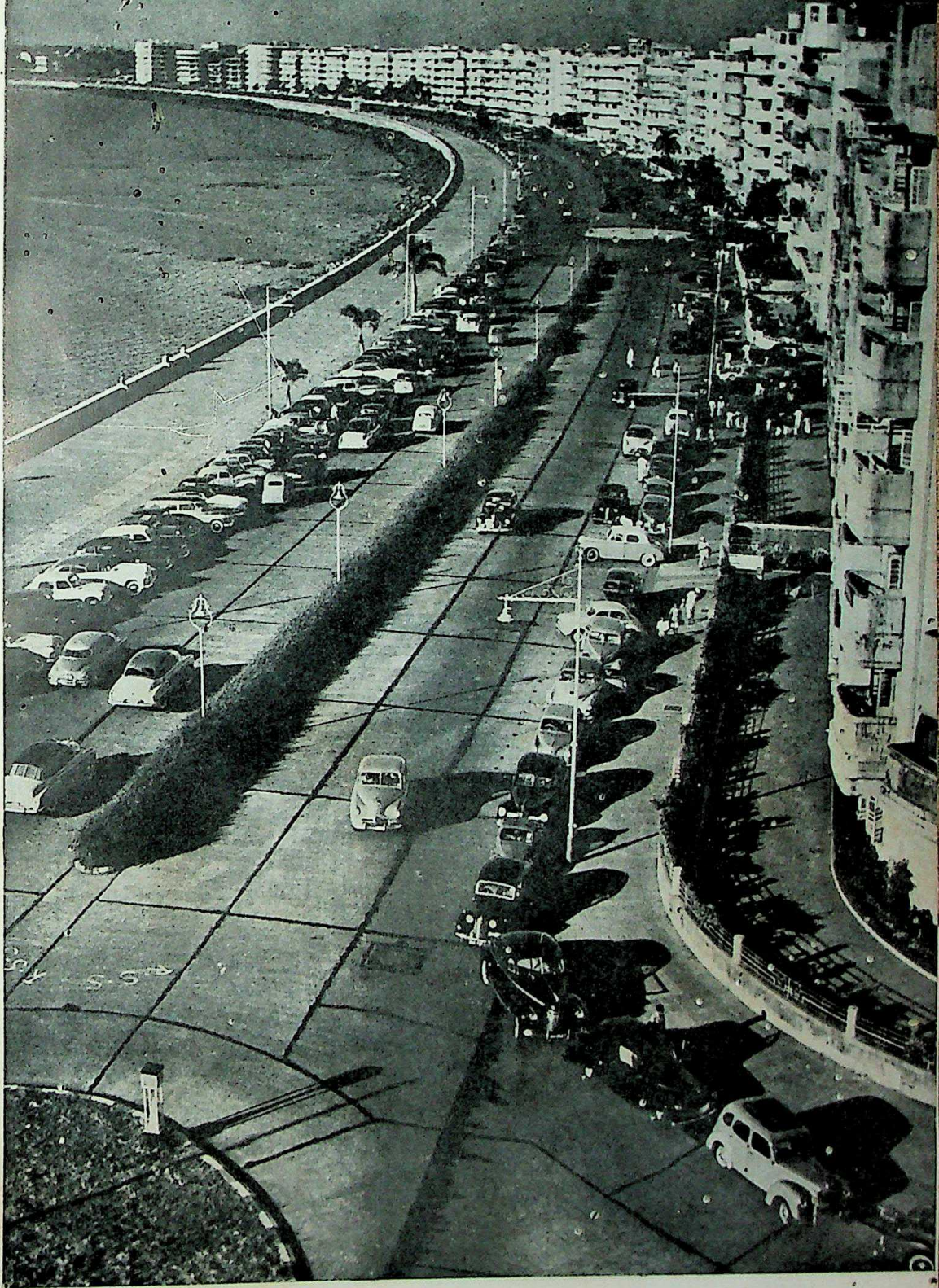
Hindustan Motors, Calcutta : Rapid expansion of India's automobile industry is under Government's active consideration. Of the existing units, the oldest in the field are Hindustan Motors.



The Magic Mirror: The artist is Kulkarni, who combines "the decorative elegance of classical Indian painting with the vitality and vigour of the Modernists".



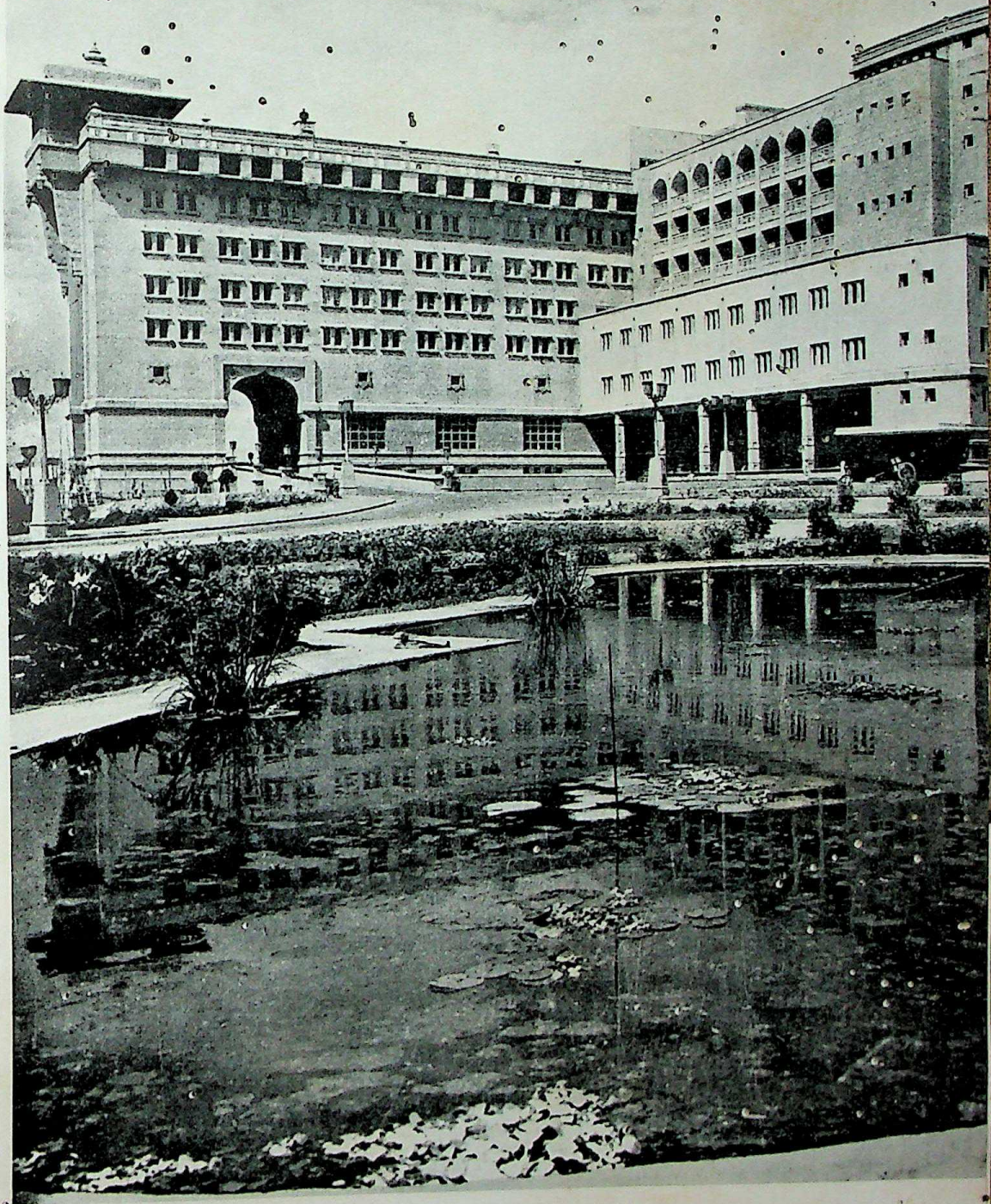
The Well : Sailoz Mukerji's treatment of an age-old theme in Indian art emphasises the style, technique and approach, typical of the Indian Artist of today.



Marine Drive, Bombay : Reclaimed land turned into most picturesque spot ! For the lovely effect produced by night-lights, the gracefully curving drive is called the Queen's Necklace.



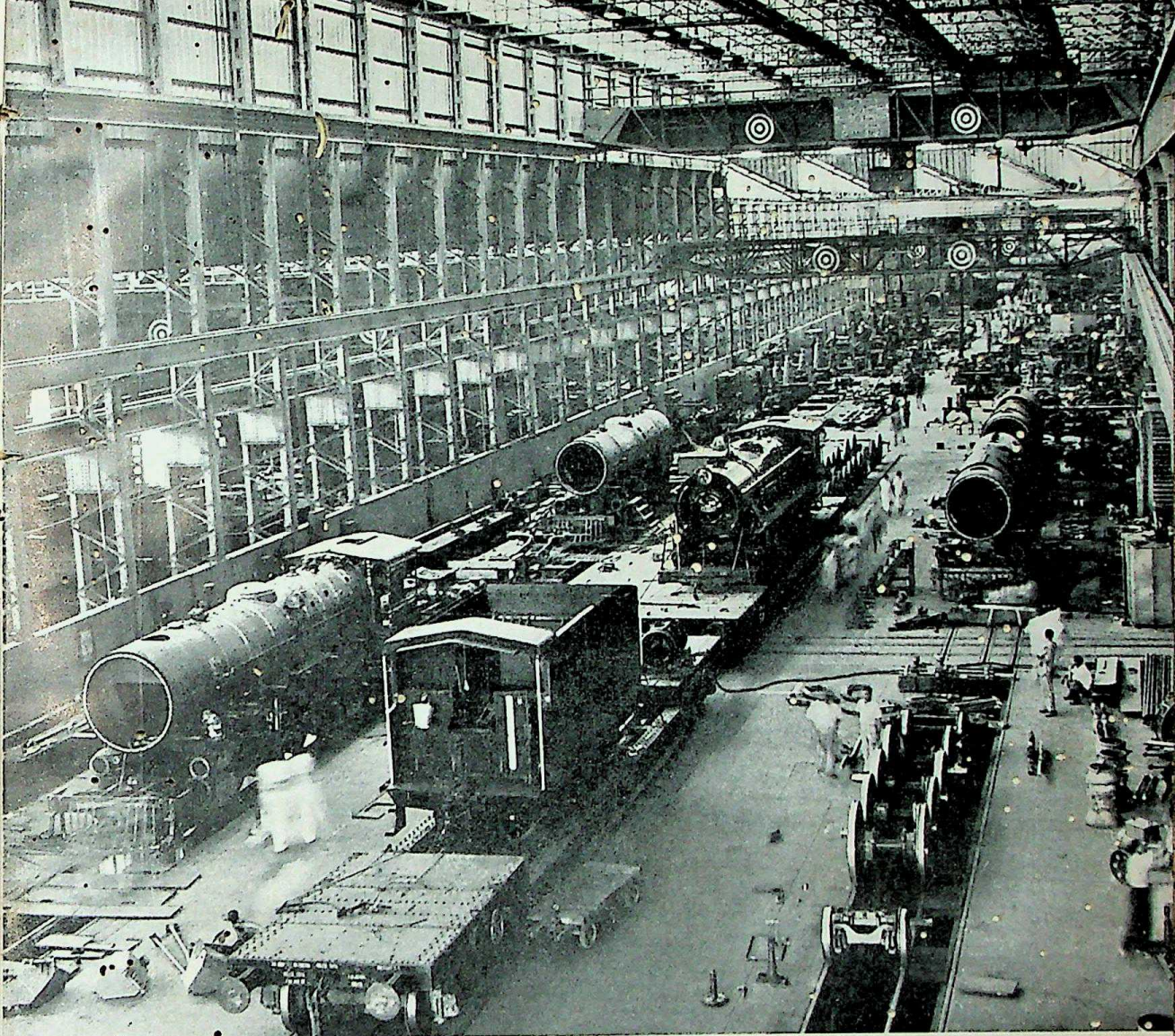
Music : This fascinating representation of an abstract art in an abstract idiom is by Dhánraj Bhagat, one of India's foremost modern sculptors.



Asoka Hotel, New Delhi : India's Luxury Hotel, set up, especially, to cater to the V.I.P. visitors to the Capital. Draped in monumental grandeur, the structure dominates the landscape for miles.



Howrah Bridge, Calcutta : Calcutta's most impressive sight is this famous cantilever bridge built in 1941. Spanning the River Hooghli, it connects Howrah with Calcutta.



Tata Electric Locomotive & Engineering Works, Tatanagar: Along with Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Telco meet India's requirements in this field. Tata Locomotives are M.G. Engines.



Chandigarh (Punjab): An unknown village till yesterday, Chandigarh, Capital of the Punjab, is India's modern-most town. It was planned by a team of architects headed by Le Corbusier.

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